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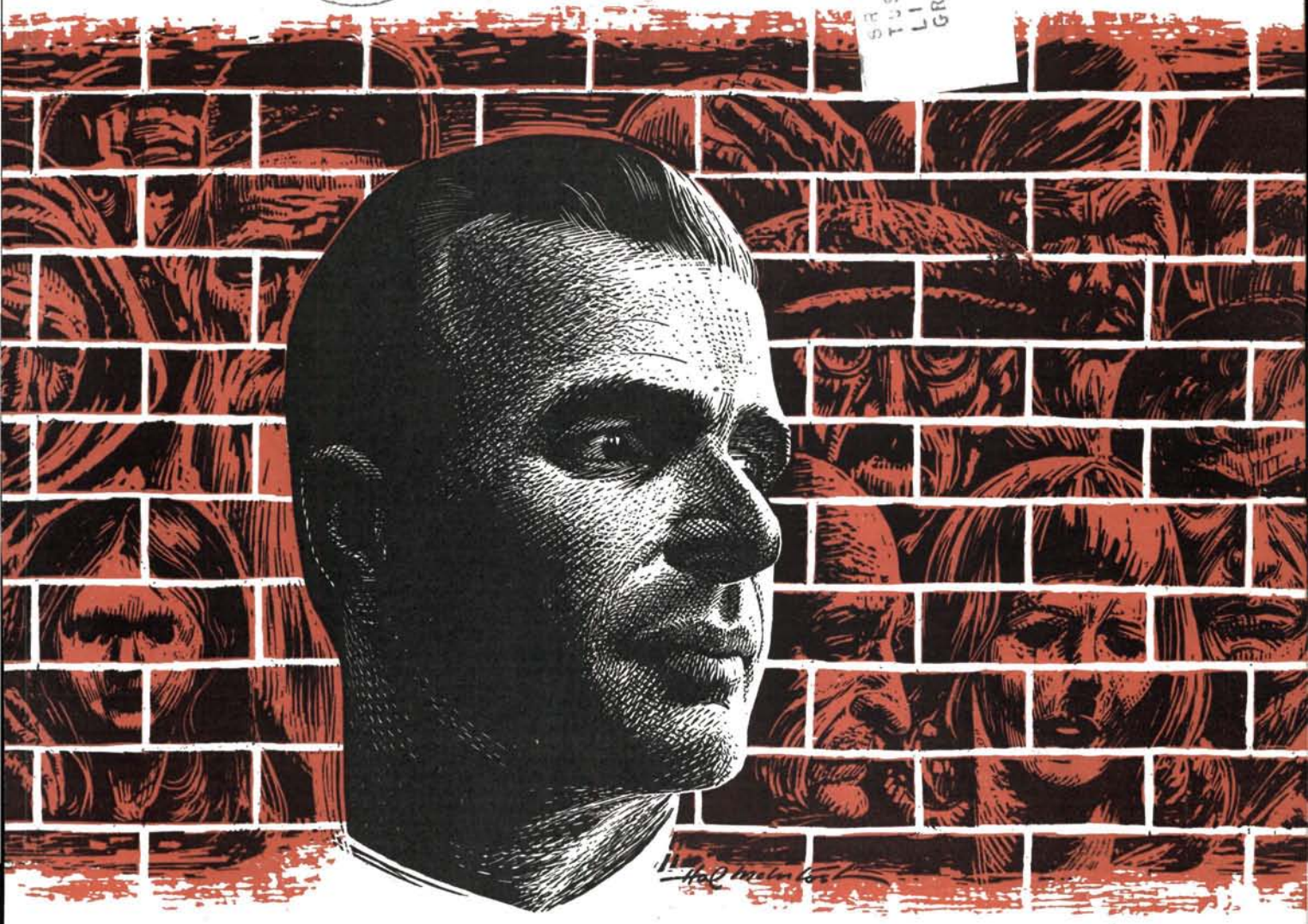

John Hersey, author of "The Wall." (See page 14)

Messengers from A Free Country

By ERIC JOHNSTON

Winston Churchill: Academician Extraordinary

By JOHN MASON BROWN

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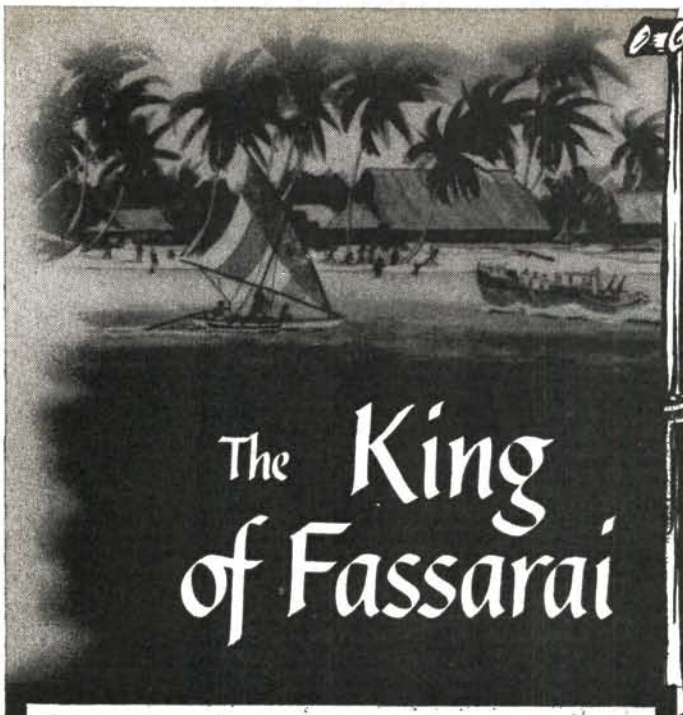

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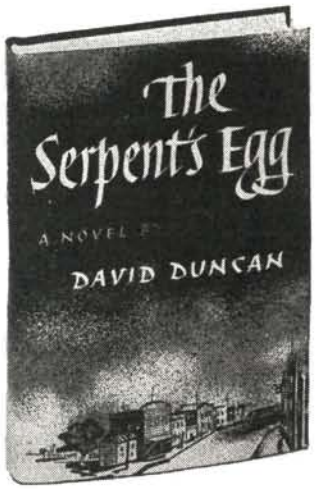

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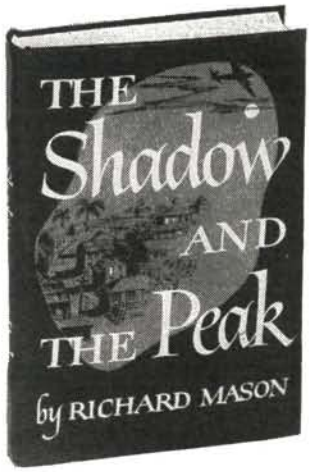

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March 4, 1950

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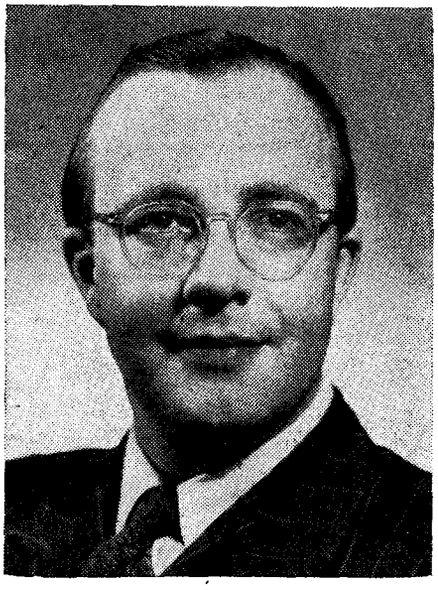
TRADE Winds

THE STORY OF BRENTANO'S

THEY'VE BEEN shuffling the big brass in the Brentano book chain and Nixon Griffis, a young man who looks as if he's got everything it takes, is the new president. Arthur Brentano, Jr., has been upped to chairman of the board, and Joe Margolies, who once seemed doomed to selling books on the road for the most ruggedly individualistic publisher in the business, but got off with seven months for good behavior, is vice president. Joe is also head buyer for the chain and knows every trick in the book for increasing discounts, cutting corners, and keeping his stock the most complete in the country.

The new set-up plans to keep its New York, Washington, Paris, San Francisco, Hartford, and Pittsburgh outlets as a nucleus and add to the chain a number of leased departments in big-name stores throughout the East. Two Honolulu branches are for sale.

Nixon Griffis follows in the footsteps of his distinguished father, Stanton, banker, diplomat, chairman of the boards of Madison Square Garden and Paramount Pictures, and patsy of contract-bridge sharks the world over. Stanton rescued Brentano's from the wolves in 1933 but was sidetracked by multitudinous outside interests. So far in the background of the Brentano picture did he choose to lurk, in fact, that fifteen full years after he had assumed the presidency one of our leading Broadway columnists printed the item "Has Stanton Griffis, former Ambassador to Poland, purchased the Brentano book stores?" It is "scoops" like these, announced with the breathless excitement and triumph an ordinary citizen would reserve for the discovery of a live whale in a bowl of clam chowder, that make the gossip columnists such an essential and exhilarating feature of present-day civilization.

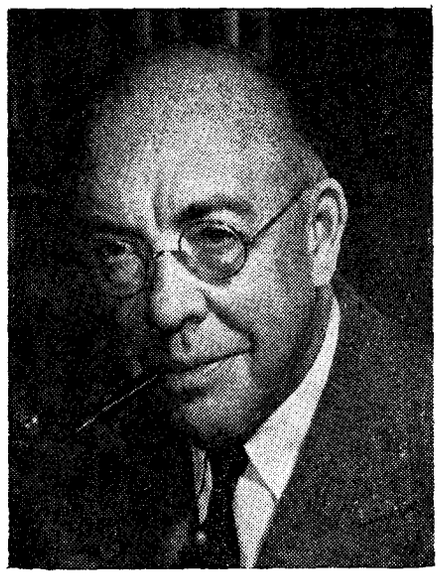


Nixon Griffis—"in the footsteps of a distinguished father." . . .

Through all its days of glory, the vicissitudes of the Depression Era, and its revival via the Griffis savvy and bank-roll, the name of Brentano has stood for everything that's finest in retail bookselling for over ninety years—the one chain whose name is a byword to the general public from Canarsie to Catalina. And if old August Brentano, who started the whole ball rolling in 1853, could see the way the stores that bear his name are operated today I don't think he'd find very much to complain about.

This August Brentano came to New York from Austria with no money and no friends, but he had energy and he had imagination. His first venture was a single table of books and periodicals in the hallway of the old Revere House at Broadway and Houston Street, but he called it "Brentano's Literary Emporium"—and he prospered. By 1865 he occupied half a building at 708 Broadway, sharing the premises with a tobacco business owned by the fathers of Charles and Daniel Frohman, of theatrical fame. The store was opposite the New York Hotel, patronized largely by wealthy Southerners and the most distinguished visitors from abroad. The visitors demanded books and periodicals hitherto unknown in America, and Mr. Brentano's stock became unique in this country. At the same time the Southern gentlemen — and their ladies—brought into the shop an atmosphere of gentility and class which the proprietor was quick to capitalize. When the business moved to 33 Union Square in 1870 it was already the most flourishing and successful bookstore in America.

Union Square was the residential section of New York in those days. The Goelet mansion was next door to the new store. Tiffany's was down the block and that wily reprobate Dan'l Drew lived on the Seventeenth Street corner. Visitors to New York were cautioned not to miss a trip to Brentano's, where they might catch a glimpse of Charles Dickens or Ralph Waldo Emerson or William Cullen Bryant or even of Ulysses S. Grant!



. . . Stanton Griffis—"banker, diplomat, and [contract] patsy."

In 1873 August Brentano's staff was enlarged by one. His nephew Arthur, fifteen years old, arrived from Evansville and was promptly put to work delivering newspapers to customers south of Sixteenth Street. He learned his job so quickly that his appreciative uncle soon promoted him by adding Seventeenth and Eighteenth streets to his route. His brother Simon also came into the shop and it wasn't many years—nine to be exact—before the enterprising pair bought out their uncle entirely.

This was in 1882. Two years later the Washington branch was opened. And in 1887 Arthur went to Europe and established a Brentano branch in Paris. He was also married there in 1890, with Whitelaw Reid arranging the formalities for him and Robert Chambers acting as best man.

One day in 1898 a fire burned down the house next door to Brentano's New York store and every book in stock was destroyed. The water in the basement was six feet deep. There wasn't such a magnificent clean-out of old stock in the book business again until twenty-six years later when the Boni & Liveright stockroom went up in flames. Even that occasion fell short, for the New York Fire Department arrived just in time to save for posterity 11,000 copies of Hendrik Van Loon's "Story of the Bible" despite the barbed wire and sandbags loyal employees put up to impede the intrepid fire fighters' progress.

Brentano's rebuilt—bigger and better than ever—and Admiral Dewey unwittingly assisted in the opening ceremonies of the new store. The hero of Manila was virtually the Clark Gable of his day and his arrival at Brentano's was attended by the autograph hunters of 1901 en masse. Arthur Brentano spirited the Admiral

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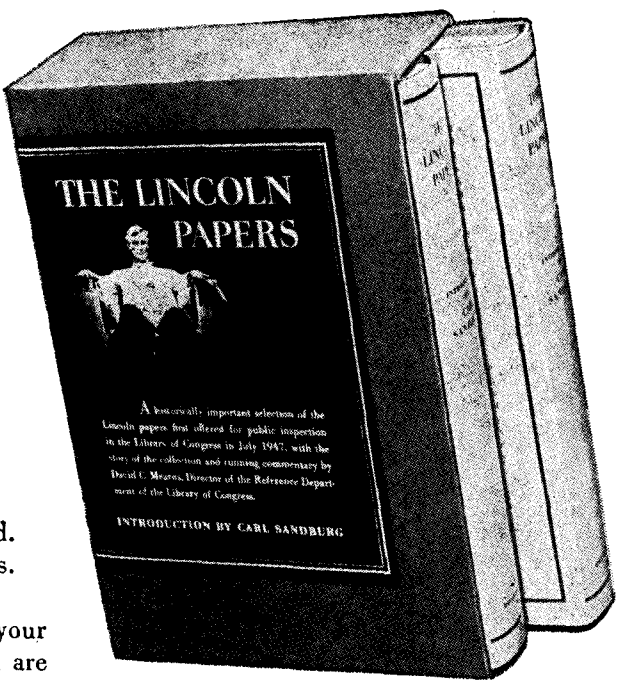

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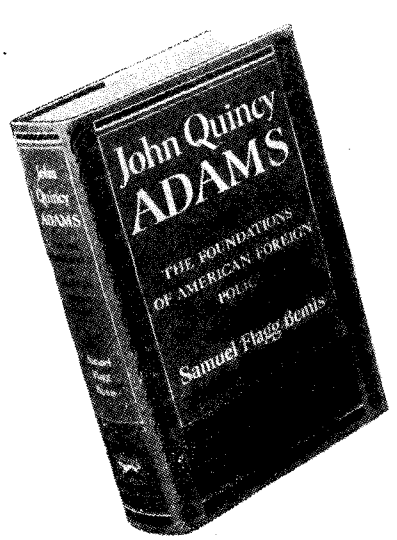

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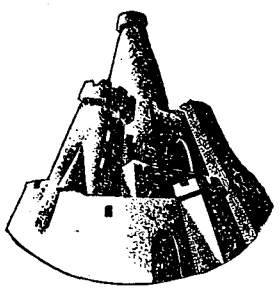

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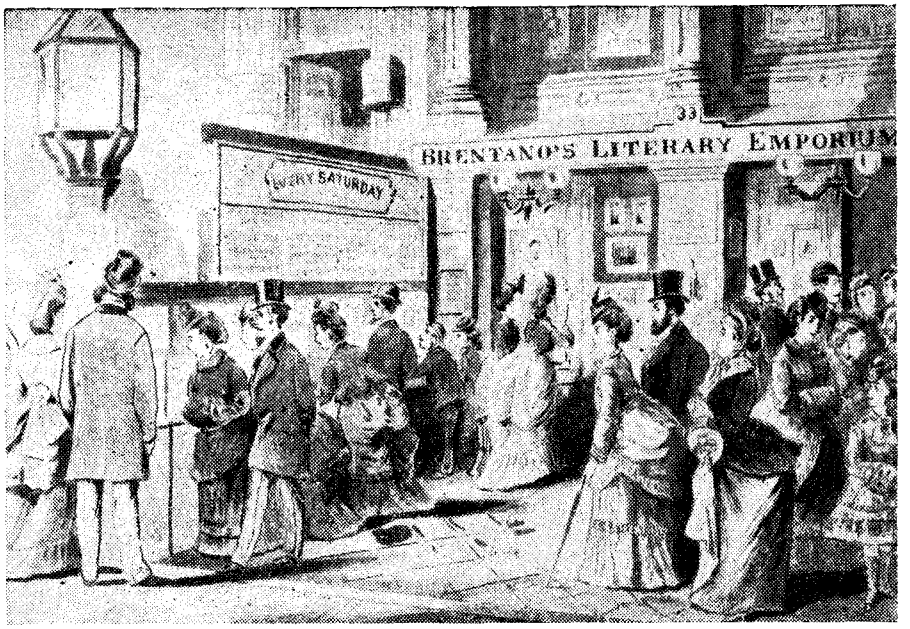

"Visitors might catch a glimpse of Dickens or Emerson or Bryant or even Grant."

out through a back alley. "It was the nearest thing to a riot in our store," he recalled years later, "until the day we gave an autographing party for Gertrude Stein."

In 1907 Brentano's moved to Fifth Avenue and Twenty-seventh Street. Shucks, that was only yesterday! Even I can remember the wonderful store they had down there, with the originals of all the magazine covers in the side-street windows and the huge pile of periodicals from all over the world in the basement! This was when Arthur Brentano began the fine and rare book department that is still a feature of the main store today, when George Bernard Shaw signed to have all his plays published in America by Brentano's, and when Theodore Roosevelt came in one day and ordered the pigskin library that he took with him to Africa.

Horace Liveright gave me my start in publishing in 1923 and that is when I caught my first glimpse behind the scenes at Brentano's. The store had an indescribable glamour; the staff harbored some rare and congenial personalities (Laurence Gomme, Ernest Dell, Jean Lawlor, Pauline Mazie, May Ryan, and Winifred Hammond are enlisted to this day under the Brentano banner). Joe Margolies was already the buyer, but to reach his office on the fourth floor you had to wade through a whole regiment of Armenian rug dealers, Lowell Brentano, Stuart Rose, and a convivial gentleman named Berkeley Tobey, who was doing something or other in the advertising department, although nobody, including the entire Brentano family, knew exactly what. Bill Goodpasture, already making fantastically inaccurate forecasts of big-league pennant races, would come in occasionally from the Chicago store, and the now retired Sid Avery would run up from Washington. They bought as a group —but made returns separately.

Retail trade was heading northward in those carefree days of bull markets, flaming youth, and pocket flasks—and Brentano's followed the trend. The present store at Forty-seventh Street was opened in 1925, and three New York branches were established soon after. The chain spread to Pittsburgh, Cleveland, and Philadelphia. Business boomed but so did expenses. The crash in 1929 left Brentano's, like so many of the country's best bookstores, with a huge inventory of expensive books and a top-heavy overhead. In the spring of 1930 a group of publishers formed what I believe they called a protective committee and in three years of unique mismanagement threw the entire corporation into bankruptcy. In March 1933 Brentano's found itself in the tender hands of that well-known and experienced retail bookselling organization The Irving Trust Company.

A pretty pass. And what to do? "Save Brentano's" was the rallying cry of all the generous publishers (who were also the creditors). Expenses were pared to the bone. The publishing department was disposed of to Coward-McCann. All but the main store in New York and the branches in Washington, Chicago, and Paris were discontinued. But most important of all, frantic beaters flushed Stanton Griffis from the Wall Street bushes and cajoled him into buying control of the Brentano business. It was the dawn of a new day in the history of a fine old firm.

—BENNETT CERF.

(To be concluded in next week's TRADE WINDS *column.)*

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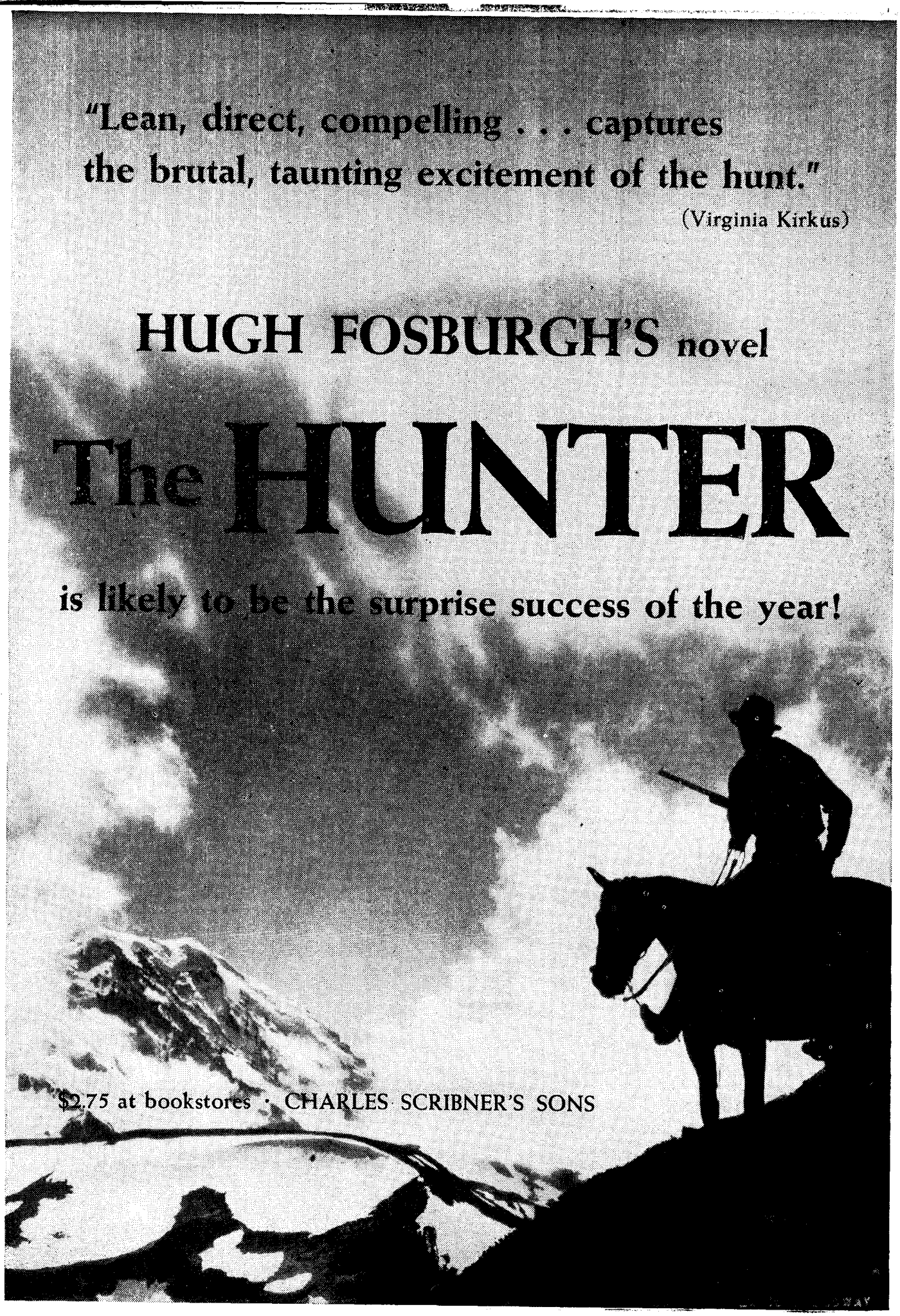

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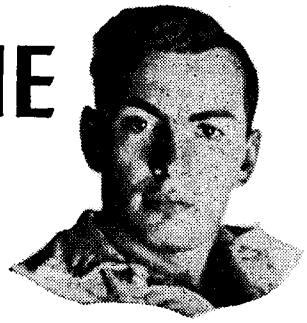

By GORE VIDAL

Three modern young Huck Finns of Fifth Avenue

BOB CONSIDINE, the columnist, has three sons who have grown up in New York City (with short excursions to the country) and the joys and headaches of raising them in a "nine-room shanty" on Fifth Avenue, make a hilarious book. Once you meet Michael, aged thirteen, Barry, aged seven, and Dennis who is five, you realize that even a newspaper man can be overwhelmed and surprised by the unexpected.

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The Saturday Review of Literature

Messengers from a Free Country

ERIC JOHNSTON

THE SATURDAY REVIEW has generously afforded me opportunity to reply to its three-part editorial "The Free Ride" [*SRL* Jan. 21, 28, Feb. 4], in which it discusses American motion pictures abroad.

The pin-point of Mr. Cousins's editorial thesis, around which all else revolves, is that our motion pictures, with their distorted view of American life, are more damaging to American interests overseas than anti-American propaganda emanating from Moscow.

If this is true, it is a deadly serious matter.

It is a deadly serious matter because, as Mr. Cousins says, "The American movie is the main source of information about America to most of the people of the world." He puts the American motion picture above the Voice of America, the American press, books, periodicals, and radio.

Hollywood is accustomed to criticism. It is always open season on Hollywood. Some of the criticism is deserved. Some isn't. Some of it is frivolous, but indictment by one of Mr. Cousins's eminence and stature cannot be taken lightly, least of all by any of us in the motion-picture industry. It commands and deserves the most candid and searching examination.

Perhaps no American is more to be honored than Mr. Cousins for the valiant fight he has always waged against the evil practice of condemning people in the mass.

Yet, in these editorials he has employed the principle against which he inveighs. He has condemned Hollywood pictures in the mass. His indictment is a blanket one.

Nowhere in his editorial trilogy has he mentioned the name of a single motion picture to bolster his premise that Hollywood productions are defaming America abroad.

I venture to suggest that Mr. Cousins, as the editor of *The Saturday Review of Literature*, would view with some astonishment a manuscript appraising current American literature without mentioning even one book. Indeed, could such a manuscript ever pass the sub-editors and reach Mr. Cousins's desk?

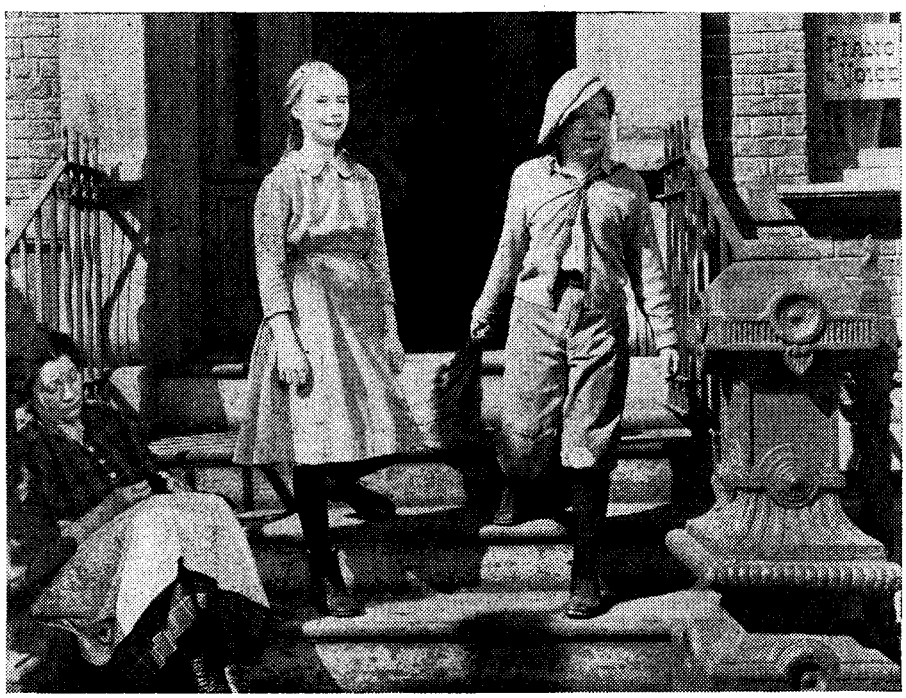
Mr. Cousins doesn't mention names but he does list sources supporting his opinion on the evil doings of Hollywood films. In Paris he talked to a "friend attached to the embassy." In Japan his sources were more numerous. He talked to his Japanese interpreter, to the "manager of a dance hall," and "a professor in Yokohama." And, of course, Mr. Cousins took his own private poll of audience reaction.

Like Mr. Cousins, I have made many trips abroad. Like Mr. Cousins, too, I have made it a point to see American pictures everywhere I went. I, too, was impressed by the long queues at the box offices—by the great popularity of American pictures. Like Mr. Cousins, I too have some sources.

Here, for example, is Major General W. F. Marquat, attached to the headquarters of the Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers in Japan as chief of the economic and scientific section. The general says: "There is no question but that American films are a most important vehicle of democratization in Japan."

MAKOTO HORI is a member of the Japanese House of Councillors. This Japanese legislator, in a letter to General MacArthur, wrote: "American motion pictures are proving an important social force in edifying the Japanese nation. By presenting aspects of American democracy in a way we can all understand, these films are giving our people a better understanding of America and an insight into the better way of life in a democratic society."

Makoto Hori pointed out that Amer-



—Stills by courtesy of Museum of Modern Art Film Library.

"A Tree Grows in Brooklyn"—". . . we live in penthouses and we live in slums."

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"The Yearling"—". . . a tough, hardy, and individualistic people."

ican pictures are being recommended by the Japanese ministry of education to teachers and students in primary schools, high schools, and universities all over Japan. "From an educational standpoint," he wrote, "American motion pictures have now become textbooks for the youth of Japan."

From General MacArthur's headquarters went a priority message on March 30, 1949, to the Department of the Army which said:

> The American motion-picture industry has made a magnificent contribution during the past three years to the important task of reorienting the Japanese people. This task has progressed much further than would have been conceivable without American motion pictures.

The Far East Command Motion Picture Division, in a statement appearing in *Stars and Stripes*, said it was proud of the fine job American motion pictures have done "to promote good will and democracy."

What kind of pictures are these men and those sources talking about? Documentaries? Short subjects specifically produced for educational value? Not at all. The references are to American feature films produced for entertainment. The educational value is a by-product, but in the view of these authorities a mighty one. They cite films such as "State Fair," which General George C. Marshall said, on his return from his 1947 Chinese mission, "did more to tell them [the Chinese] about America, about its heart and soul and about its people than I could possibly have told them in hours of talking."

Allen Chellas, the writer, made an exhaustive study of the influence of American films in Germany and Japan following the war, and for *This Week Magazine* he wrote: "These movies are helping our military win the battle of ideas by making friends and influencing erstwhile enemies along the bumpy road to democracy."

Irving Brown, long-time representative of the American Federation of Labor in Europe, says that American motion pictures are playing a vital role "in spreading American democracy abroad."

Many times I have talked with President Truman about the influence of American films abroad, and he has said he regards American films as "ambassadors of good will." Mr. Cousins referred to our pictures as a cause for "the growing concern of the men and women abroad whose job it is to create good will for the American people." Would Mr. Cousins say that President Truman, General MacArthur, General Marshall, General Marquat, and Irving Brown have no concern with the task of creating good will for America abroad? It seems unlikely they would lend approving voices to distribution of our films in foreign countries if what Mr. Cousins says is true. He says our films portray America predominately as a "nation of murderers, gangsters, idlers, deadbeats, dipsomaniacs, touts, tarts, and swindlers."

I CAN'T even guess what pictures Mr. Cousins saw when he was scouting overseas, but I'd like to mention just a few pictures which are well-known American tourists in celluloid form. These pictures speak for themselves: "The Best Years of Our Lives," "The Yearling," "Bells of St. Mary's," "Going My Way," "I Remember Mama," "Johnny Belinda," "Little Women," "Union Pacific," "Wells Fargo," "The Stratton Story," "Journey for Margaret," "The Egg and I," "Boys Town," "Welcome Stranger," Adventure in Baltimore," "The Green Promise," "Chicken Every Sunday," "Red River," "The Pride of the Yankees," "The Babe Ruth Story."

Do these pictures portray America as predominately a "nation of murderers, gangsters, idlers, deadbeats, dipsomaniacs, touts, tarts, and swindlers"?

Mr. Cousins also suggests that our pictures portray Americans as living in "plush duplex apartments with elaborate cocktail bars and retinues of servants." Says he: "We don't all sleep in kingsize beds with silk topsheets, nor do we all arise languidly at noon for breakfast in bed."

Mr. Cousins is right. Some few Americans do live like that, but most of us don't. Could Mr. Cousins have conceived the impression that Hollywood exports nothing but tales of life among the idle rich if he had seen such pictures as these on his travels: "The Grapes of Wrath," "A Tree Grows in Brooklyn," "One Foot in Heaven," "Miracle on 34th Street," "Life Begins for Andy Hardy," "Joe Smith, American," "Apartment for Peggy," "An American Romance," "G. I. Joe," "Our Vines Have Tender Grapes," "Sands of Iwo Jima"? Those are only samples of pictures with a paucity of penthouses.

Mr. Cousins's bill of generalizations against the American motion picture also includes the sin of omission as well as commission. He makes a plea for pictures which show "respect for the workings of justice and representative government, in a seasoned and enlightened understanding of what is meant by majority rule and the preservation of minority rights."

But Hollywood, Mr. Cousins deplores, believes the average mentality of filmgoers is at a twelve-year-old level, and that the American people lack the intelligence and good taste to justify improved films.

I have been reasonably well acquainted in Hollywood for some years now, and I have never heard that belief expressed nor have I sensed it. But I prefer to pit my argument on pictures such as these: "Gentleman's Agreement," "Boomerang," "Pinky," "Home of the Brave," "The Farmer's Daughter," "Intruder in the Dust," "All the King's Men," "Lost Boundaries," "Wilson," "Tennessee Johnson," "Abe Lincoln in Illinois," and "The Ox-Bow Incident."

Are these pictures lacking in respect for the workings of justice and representative government? Are they lacking in enlightened understanding of what is meant by majority rule and the preservation of minority rights?

I have mentioned pictures which I doubt if Mr. Cousins, on reflection, would want to include in his mass condemnation of distortion and defa-

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mation. We send other pictures abroad which make no pretense of realism. Light and frothy musicals. Comedies. Yes, and some "bang-bang" pictures, too, in which the rustlers bite the dust when the brave cowboys take after them. Fun stuff. Escape stuff.

Mr. Cousins suggests all through his trilogy that foreign audiences are incapable of distinguishing realism and theatrical license for entertainment purposes. Here again he employs the principle of mass condemnation. Does Mr. Cousins really believe that foreign audiences get the impression that cattle rustling is a thriving industry in America? Of course they don't. No more than Americans believe all Italians steal bicycles because they saw the Italian picture "Bicycle Thief."

Each country has its theatre, and audiences in Japan, Italy, France, and elsewhere are as well prepared as we are to accept the showmanship of theatrical license. Can it be assumed that only we Americans are able to make the distinction between real life and theatre?

Still another sin of the American motion picture is its creation of "mass disappointment" among foreign peoples, says Mr. Cousins. The people see all the material advantages we Americans have; they swarm to the consular offices for visas; they can't get visas, and so they are frustrated and unhappy. Mr. Cousins is saddened by this. We overplay the "dazzling gadgets" of America, he says.

It is true, of course, as Mr. Cousins knows, that the flood tide of immigration occurred before the motion picture existed; people have been yearning to come for a couple of centuries. It was then, and still is, "the land of opportunity" to the world's millions. Many came. Many couldn't and were disappointed. But let us stick to the present.

What would Mr. Cousins have us do? Can we paint the American scene in film without showing our automobiles, our telephones, our bathtubs, our better clothes, better roads, higher buildings, refrigerators, radios, and household conveniences? What Mr. Cousins sloughs off as "dazzling gadgets" adds up to our standard of living.

Would he have us show only pictures of primitive American life in the days of the whale-oil lantern and the sod shanty? The simple fact is that our standard of living is the world's highest. What is dishonest about pictures that reflect it? I am not saddened by a rush of interest abroad in this standard of living. I want to see a higher living standard everywhere. If our pictures can spark ambition to achieve it, it is all to advantage.

I agree with Mr. Cousins that "democracy is much more than deep-freeze units, duplex apartments, and Dynaflow." I agree that the big job in Europe and elsewhere is "not to sell the people on dazzling gadgets, but on the need to expand and preserve free government as an end in itself."

But I suggest that Mr. Cousins misses a point. These "dazzling gadgets" are products of a democracy, and we have them in such multitude largely because we work and live by the rule of democracy.

Suppose we stripped out all the "dazzling gadgets," if that were possible, and showed pictures preaching nothing but the glory of our democratic institutions?

We would do more harm than good. My observations abroad have convinced me that direct preachments about American institutions and American democracy would catch no converts. They would be rightfully dubbed as propaganda. The world is fed up with propaganda pictures. It is the absence of conscious propaganda in our films that foreigners like. That is what brings them thronging to the box offices. That is why an American picture is jammed in Prague and Helsinki while a Soviet film across the street unwinds to a corporal's guard.

Forced fed on propaganda, people turn from it with loathing, and eagerly welcome entertainment devoid of ideological lecturing and sermonizing. Again, I believe Mr. Cousins underrates the perspicacity of foreign audiences. A shot of an American drugstore can carry a more powerful message for democracy than thousands of words devoted to its whys and wherefores.

I cannot stand on that statement without conceding that not all of our pictures are ten strikes. We hit a sour note now and then. So do the products with which Mr. Cousins is principally concerned—books. Yet, I am sure he wouldn't mass-condemn all books exported from America.

Today foreign audiences are getting a balanced diet of American pictures. All of us in the motion-picture industry are doing everything we can to assure this balance. Mr. Cousins will agree, I am sure, that the whole story of America cannot be written between two covers under a single title; he must know that the whole picture of America cannot be unwound from a single reel.

So many things are true about America. We are a tough, hardy, and individualistic people. We are generous and gregarious. But there are Americans who are not tough and hardy; there are miserly Americans and intolerant Americans. There are American crooks and murderers. We are Texans or New Yorkers; Midwest farmers or Northwest foresters; New England fishermen or small-town merchants. We live in penthouses and we live in slums. We wear mink and sable, but we wear calico and gingham. We ride behind chauffeurs, but we go mule-back to town. We live in walk-ups and we live in cottages. We have never seen open country larger than a park, but we have never seen a subway or a skyscraper. America is a vast mosaic of personalities, communities, geography, background, and habit. Our pictures reflect them all.

It is our everlasting hope that our motion pictures blend together to transplant before the eyes of others the shimmering, spectral pattern that is America. It is our hope that the

"The Grapes of Wrath"—"America . . . mosaic of personalities, communities, background."

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thread of the democratic story runs through them all, without calculated emphasis, but with the more powerful emphasis of suggestion.

I believe we are succeeding. Mr. Cousins says we are giving the Kremlin a free ride. But the Kremlin has not so far climbed aboard. Its castigation of America continues. The American film is a pet hate of Communists everywhere, as the American film was the pet hate of the Nazis in the days of Adolf Hitler.

A free ride for Communism, Mr. Cousins? I say that our pictures are hated by Communism because they are messengers from a free country.

Eric Johnston is president of the Motion Picture Association of America.

Let's Look at the Message

NORMAN COUSINS

MY compliments to Mr. Johnston for a direct and hard-hitting reply. He has established a high but vigorous level of debate; I hope to be as explicit and direct in what follows.

Mr. Johnston makes the flat and astonishing claim that our pictures abroad provide a fair and balanced reflection of American life. "The thread of the democratic story runs through them all [American films]," he says. He dismisses as absurd any intimation that a serious problem exists as it concerns the effects of our movies abroad, and makes the remarkable claim that no distinction need be made between the impact of a film on an American audience and on a foreign audience. It is made to appear that my articles represent a sudden and inexplicable attack on a responsible industry and that my charges are as new as they are unfounded.

I had hoped, while Mr. Johnston was preparing his reply, that he would say frankly and openly that the industry *did* recognize that our films sent abroad represented a special problem, but that steps were being taken to meet it. I had hoped that he would regard this exchange as something more than a mere debate in which advantage is sought; I had hoped he would regard this as a public issue of national importance and point to a comprehensive program of remedial measures. Instead, Mr. Johnston says simply and unequivocally: no problem.

Surely Mr. Johnston must be aware that the American State Department has been deeply interested in the effect of our films abroad and has brought the matter directly to the attention of the industry. It would seem strange if Mr. Johnston is not aware that the motion-picture industry itself two years ago held meetings on this question and decided that something, at least, *had* to be done. What *was* done was not enough, but at least it should have come to the attention of Mr. Johnston. It would be interesting to learn why the program hasn't been as successful as had been hoped.

No one need fear, says Mr. Johnston, that erratic screen behavior of Americans will be taken seriously by peoples abroad. Do Americans believe, he asks, that all Italians steal bicycles as the result of the Italian film "Bicycle Thief"? This is a fair question, and the answer, of course, is no. But if Americans saw dozens of films about bicycle thieves, we would certainly be pretty dense if we didn't conclude that bike-swiping was something of a national problem, to say the least. Similarly, if more than 20 per cent of the movies we make are wild Westerns and a large part of the balance of the films are cheapies about Americans who are fast talkers, fast drinkers, fast killers, and fast lovers, it is only reasonable to suppose that other people should conclude that what they have seen bears some resemblance to life as it is lived in the United States.

As it concerns our action-packed Westerns, it is difficult to explain to people who have never seen the United States at first hand that these films are sheer fantasy. Many of the wild Westerns are screened against a modern background, with modern props. Little wonder that Americans who travel abroad are frequently running up against seemingly idiotic questions about our primitive and lawless West.

But wait, says Mr. Johnston, there is such a thing as theatrical license. And foreign audiences are just as capable of making the necessary allowances as we are. I wonder, in this connection, if Mr. Johnston is familiar with the strong and urgent statement made on this subject two years ago by Senator William C. Benton, Assistant Secretary of State for Public Affairs: "Peoples of other countries lack our background for understanding what lies behind these pictures [gangster films, etc.]," Mr. Benton declared. "Many of the films seen by these peoples present a rather distorted picture of the United States."

MR. JOHNSTON calls attention to the fact that I neglected to state my sources. What I wrote represented my own impressions; moreover, I was writing an editorial, not a survey. Such conversations as I referred to were mentioned not for documentary but for illustrative purposes. But Mr. Johnston seems to want a bill of par-

Heureux Qui Peult

Heureux qui peult long temps, sans danger de poison,
Jouir d'un chapeau rouge, ou des clefz de Sainct Pierre.
—DU BELLAY

By Alfred Noyes

HAPPY the man who for a cause has fought
And feels no comrade's bludgeon on his nob;
Or, called to rule and speak his honest thought,
Escapes the braying ass who wants his job.

Happy the man who wears a scarlet hat,
Or, at his girdle, hangs the heavier keys;
And, after fourteen years or so of that,
Has not been poisoned by a friendly cheese.

Happy the man who wins the smile of kings,
And finds no daggers waiting on the stair.
Happy the bard who in a vineyard sings,
Where Zoilus cannot have him by the hair.

But happiest he whose hundred hens, Bellay,
Uncowed by Cripps, release five eggs a day.

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ticulars and is entitled to it. The friend in the Paris embassy is Arne Eckstrom. As for the Japanese sources, Mr. Johnston may not have noticed that my references here did not concern the motion pictures, but the general question of democratization. But I am glad to supply the names nevertheless. The interpreter was Catherine Takumi. The professor was J. Ohsava. The night-club manager worked for the Club Florida in Tokyo.

Since the question of sources has come up, however, I am sure Mr. Johnston will be interested in the opinion of Thomas K. Finletter, former Marshall Plan chief for Great Britain, and at present a member of a small committee set up in ECA for the express purpose of improving the quality of American films sent abroad: "Our films are in many cases the main source of entertainment for peoples abroad. They are also the main source of information about America. As such it is difficult to underestimate the actual and potential damage of many of the films featuring violence, lawlessness, and extravagance."

Serving with Mr. Finletter on this committee is Dr. George N. Shuster, who in addition to his national prominence as educator has been one of our Government's top consultants on overseas problems. Dr. Shuster has authorized *The Saturday Review* to quote him as follows: "When Hollywood produces a distinguished film the United States has a magnificent ambassador of good will working on its behalf. Unfortunately, however, Hollywood is unloading a vast number of cheap and tawdry films, which can do infinite harm. The question, of course, is one of balance. And the scales right now are heavily tipped the wrong way."

Mr. Johnston refers to a general statement on the American movies by Makota Hori, a Japanese legislator. Mr. Johnston may also be interested in a somewhat different viewpoint expressed by Kiyoshi Togashi, president of the *Nippon Times*, Japan's most important English-speaking newspaper. Mr. Togashi is a graduate of the University of California and is prominently associated with groups in Japan working for civil liberties and for the democratization of the Japanese people. Mr. Togashi's statement:

> The extreme situations portrayed by Hollywood films serve to give a distorted view of America to young people in Japan. The Japanese are not sufficiently familiar with America to put stories of the wild West, detectives, and hold-up men in their proper perspectives. Not recognizing these films for what they are, Japanese people do not receive a healthy picture of American life from the motion pictures, according to many complaints I have received by many parents.

Does Mr. Johnston still insist that no problem exists? That no distinction need be made between American and foreign audiences?

"Kiss of Death"—"no problem."

"Ride the Pink Horse"—"not all of our pictures are ten-strikes."

MR. JOHNSTON did, however, catch me off base in one particular. He is right when he says that I made the mistake of condemning American pictures in the mass. My case would have been much stronger if I had made necessary exceptions for a number of fine and worth-while films that do credit to the industry and America both—films such as "The Best Years of Our Lives," "Johnny Belinda," "The Grapes of Wrath," "Gentleman's Agreement," "Miracle on 34th Street," etc.; and I want to pay tribute here to the producers, directors, actors, and artists who have added to their reputations by sharing in the creation of such outstanding pictures.

Films such as these, when shown abroad, are in fact the "good-will ambassadors" referred to by President Truman. I seriously doubt, however, that the President has seen reports from American public servants in the field concerning the effects of the preponderance.

Yet here, it seems to us, is where the issue between Mr. Johnston and myself comes most sharply into focus. Mr. Johnston presents a list of impressive films produced during the past few years, title by title, as though to suggest that these pictures are by no means a fraction of the total, but actually a representative cross-section of the Hollywood product. There is a casual reference to films of lesser distinction: "other" pictures are produced which "make no pretense at realism." There are also "some" films of the bang-bang variety. But these are only "fun stuff" and "escape stuff." Would Mr. Johnston agree that these "some" and "other" films come to about 90 per cent of the total?

In short, what Mr. Johnston indicates are the exceptions we contend are the rule, and vice versa. The fine films he lists—and which I was mistaken not to acknowledge in my editorials—are only a mound alongside a mountainous mediocrity. But there is no need to argue the point. It can readily be settled by consulting the complete list of films sent abroad by Hollywood in a single year. Such a list would demonstrate that Mr. Johnston may have made the understatement of the century when he concedes that "not all of our pictures are ten-strikes."

In subsequent columns *SRL* pub-

(*Continued on page 28*)

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Fiction. *Prophecy, we know, is an exceedingly precarious business. Yet we are willing to hazard the guess that this is a week that will long be remembered in literary circles. It sees the publication of John Hersey's "The Wall," a novel which will certainly rank among the distinguished ficton of 1950 and may well be judged one of the outstanding literary achievements of our time. Maxwell Geismar reviews this grand, complex, and brilliantly moving re-creation of the martyrdom of the Jewish community in Warsaw during the Nazi occupation. This week's new fiction contains a number of other books definitely better than run-of-mill: James Wellard's gentle satire about a miracle in modern Italy, "Journey to a High Mountain"; William Demby's flavorsome story of Negro life in a West Virginia town, "Beetlecreek," and Daphne Rooke's "A Grove of Fever Trees," latest fruit of South Africa's extraordinary current resurgence.*

Experiment in Genocide

THE WALL. By John Hersey. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 632 pp. $4.

By MAXWELL GEISMAR

"THE WALL" is a novel based on the martyrdom of Polish Jewry during the Nazi occupation. It is the most complex and brilliant of John Hersey's books so far. It is the best novel I have read in 1950 and it may be the best novel of the year.

First of all it is an achievement in scholarship and study in human understanding. The culture of the Polish Jews extended back to the fourteenth century, when Casimir the Great invited them to develop the crafts and trades of his community. This was in many respects a feudal and medieval society; in moral terms it was the link between the origins of Western culture and modern Europe—the living testament of God. "The Wall" somehow manages to suggest these historical dimensions without a trace of pedagogy and even catches the peculiar tone of this society—righteous, devout, melancholy, cunning, and ironic—that we usually associate with such authors as Peretz or Sholem Aleichem.

The Nazis were determined to wipe out this culture in toto—its records, books, libraries, temples, social institutions, men, women, and, particularly, children—perhaps because it was the clearest evidence of the religious and moral values which they opposed. And in effect they did. "The Wall" is the fictional account of this experiment in genocide from the point of view of the Jews who lived in Warsaw, and on the technical level, too, that of sheer exposition and narrative, the story is excellent. Mr. Hersey has brought together the flow of historical events, the routines of daily life in the Ghetto which the Nazis set up, the levels of Jewish society which operated there, and the most diverse types of personality. This is a panorama of souls who, condemned to hunger, disease, torture, and obliteration, either broke down completely or flowered even more vividly.

The form of the novel is that of a diary, broken and episodic on the surface, which combines melodrama and intrigue, scenes of domestic life or social organization, profiles, portraits, studies in character development, with the group scenes of hunger, typhus, mob terror, the organized manhunts, the mass executions. The technique is that of "inner exposition"—the record of these events as they are perceived by the victims of the trap or as they are conveyed through individual stories. The keeper of the diary is Noach Levinson, a Jewish historian who is determined to preserve every detail of Jewish life during these years, since curiosity and understanding are all that he has left. "Above all, we must keep a record. . . . There is nothing to leave behind but history."

—Drawn for the book by William Sharp.

So Noach is everywhere in the Ghetto, preserving this final record of extermination, from the most intimate details in the lives of his people to their political stratagems and philosophical speculations. From a solitary observer he becomes a "family man," living with the Apts, who had previously belonged to the wealthy merchant class, and the Mazurs, who are devout Hasidic Jews. Family life in the Ghetto was, of course, an ironical and tragic euphemism. The German system broke down all ordinary values of a decent life; it was intended to dehumanize the Jews before they were liquidated. The son of Reb Yechiel Mazur is forced to ask his father to volunteer for "resettlement" (the death chamber) in order to save his own wife. The mother, Froi Mazur, accepts this task voluntarily in order to save her children, bringing with her "nothing but a pair of slippers, symbolizing readiness for death, and a pair of candles, to make her prayers go straight to God."

The Nazis, indeed, took everything of value—property, clothes, rings, jewelry, gold inlays from teeth—before they sent the naked bodies into the sealed railway cars, the steam chambers, the gas rooms, the common grave.

Yet Noach Levinson's "family" continued to increase, until it included Berson, the amateur and dilettante; Slonim, the cold, analytical theorist; Rappaport, the old Socialist lion; Menkes, the baker; Fein, the rough worker; Schpunt, the "clown" whose antics delighted the Germans whom he hated, and a host of others. When Froi Mazur reported for death, Rachel Apt became the new mother of the group, just as new members replaced those who had disappeared daily.

There are very tender, touching, and lyrical scenes of ordinary life in the early sections of "The Wall," for everything that had been common and ordinary now became precious. There are scenes of violence, of increasing corruption and dissension among the Jews, too, for the Nazis set up what was in effect a forced survival struggle among the survivors in the Ghetto. Pan Apt, the jeweler, decides to trust the generosity of his Polish friends; young David, the brother of Rachel, "takes a walk" to Palestine. Meanwhile the "reduction" of the Jewish population continues. In the last stages of the process, "it is safe to say," says the cautious Noach Levinson, "that more than 300,000 Jews have been liquidated in a period of about two and a half months."

In April 1943 the Jewish under-

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John Hersey

THE AUTHOR: A visitor to Hiroshima these days is asked many questions about America. But there's one question that's close to the top of the list. It doesn't matter whether you're talking to the mayor or the "Bar-Bar," as one of the local haircutters advertises himself — the leading question is about a person. Not about the President or the Secretary of State or celebrated generals or even movie stars. The person they want to know about is John Hersey.

The first night I arrived in Hiroshima I had dinner with the mayor and about a dozen community leaders. The conversation was only a few minutes old when the name of John Hersey came up. Did I happen to know the man who had done so much for the city? What was he doing now? How old was he? Did he have a family? What was his reputation in America?

I told them such facts about John Hersey as I happened to know—that his parents were missionaries and that he was born in China; that he came to America as a young boy and went to school and college here, graduating from Yale about twelve or thirteen years ago; that he became a secretary and assistant to one of the most important of American writers, Sinclair Lewis; that he became affiliated with *Time* and *Life* magazines, for which he was a war correspondent on both fronts; that prior to "Hiroshima" he had written an account of war in the Pacific, "Into the Valley," and a novel about our Army in Italy, "A Bell for Adano."

I told them that I was proud to know Mr. Hersey, that few authors in America enjoyed greater esteem among the American people and, indeed, among their fellow writers. I told them that the same qualities the people of Hiroshima had admired in Hersey's book about their city—compassion without sticky sentimentality, an almost monumental integrity, an eloquent simplicity, a basic respect for his craft—were the qualities that had brought him to the fore among American writers while still a young man of thirty-five. I told them that he was happily married, lived in Connecticut with his attractive wife and four youngsters, that he was active in the life of his community, especially with respect to schools.

At this point, Dr. Fujii, one of the central characters in Hersey's "Hiroshima," spoke up.

"I am glad to hear this," Dr. Fujii said. "You know, when he was here speaking to me, and when I looked at him, I said to myself, 'This young man is the type of American the great President Lincoln must have been. He even looks like the pictures of Lincoln I have seen in the history books. He is slender and tall—one of the tallest men I have ever seen anywhere. And he is so understanding and sympathetic.'"

The next day I visited Dr. Fujii at his rebuilt hospital to find out more about his recollections of John Hersey. "Mr. Hersey, he is a remarkable man," said Dr. Fujii. "Everything in his 'Hiroshima' was just as he said it was. It was remarkable to see how accurate and careful he was with the facts. When he came to visit me I didn't know that he was a journalist. You see, many Americans had come in to interview me in the ten months since the bombing—some of them were doctors, others were investigators for the American or Japanese Government, and I thought Mr. Hersey was one of them. I have kept his calling card. If you would like to see it I have it here in my wallet. It's become one of my prized possessions."

Dr. Fujii carefully handed me the card, which listed *The New Yorker* and *Life* magazines, for which Hersey was correspondent, and his address at that time.

"I did not know in 1945," said Dr. Fujii, "that these were the names of magazines and that Mr. Hersey was a famous correspondent so I gave him brief answers. When you see him and give him my best wishes, please remember to apologize for my brevity. It was very interesting to see that he remembered every word of our three-hour conversation."

Two days later I visited one of the other central characters in "Hiroshima"—Mrs. Nakamura, the dressmaker. She still lived in the one-room shack in which John Hersey had interviewed her. Slits and holes in the wooden walls were stuffed with paper and cardboard and everywhere there were signs of severe privation and poverty. But there was nothing depressed about Mrs. Nakamura.

"And do you know Mr. Hersey?" she asked almost at once. "He is such a wonderful man. Every time I think of him I have to smile because he is so big and this room is so small. He sat on the floor as you are doing now, with his feet propped up in front of him, and it seemed as though his legs filled the entire room. He was so friendly and kind."

I mention these conversations because they highlight, it seems to me, two things about John Hersey that contribute the most to his stature as an important American writer. The first is his conviction that human values, human feelings, and human experiences are the basic building blocks of writing—no matter how sweeping or seemingly abstract the event written about may be. This holds for non-fiction and fiction both. The second is a deep sense of purpose in his writing—the feeling that history-in-the-making calls for the most painstaking care and research.

These are the ingredients of integrity in a writer, and nowhere are they more in evidence than in "The Wall"—to which John Hersey has devoted much of his time since early in 1945, when, as a correspondent in Russia, he was taken on a tour that included Estonia and Poland. What he saw in the concentration camps, then being liberated, and in what had once been the ghettos, convinced him that Americans must be told exactly what had happened, so far as it was within his ability as a writer to present the facts.

A year was devoted to further digging here in the United States—talking to survivors, examining material sent to this country, going through translations of thousands of letters and newspapers. After many months of actual writing he decided he would have to scrap everything he had done, because he felt that his book needed a central character around whom the story could develop. It was not enough to tell what had happened in the Ghetto in terms of actual experience; he wanted to get inside one person and make it *his* story. The result is a novel that will do as much for the reputation of contemporary American literature as for Hersey himself.

—NORMAN COUSINS.

This week's author biography appears by arrangement with the Book of the Month Club News, *which publishes this sketch in its March issue.*

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ground fighters put up their last desperate resistance against the Nazi tanks, flame throwers, and heavy artillery, and the Battle of the Warsaw Ghetto takes up the last quarter of "The Wall." In a way, this is the least successful part of the novel, perhaps because Mr. Hersey can't quite bring himself to describe the full extent of the Nazi terror. This was surely a nightmare world from its inception to the flaming inferno of its finale, and what "The Wall" lacks is just this final sense of horror and evil. Its tone is almost too rational, fluid, delicate, and tender. Nevertheless, it is an urgent and remarkable novel on a grand scale, and one which seizes upon our minds and hearts.

Maxwell Geismar is the author of "Writers in Crisis" and "The Last of the Provincials," two volumes of literary history and criticism, and a contributor to the "Literary History of the United States."

Umbrian Mountain Miracle

JOURNEY TO A HIGH MOUNTAIN. By James Wellard. New York: Dodd, Mead & Co. 280 pp. $3.

By ANN F. WOLFE

IS A MIRACLE less a miracle because it endows a waterless community with an irrigation pump instead of an underground chapel? Don Cesare, parish priest of Sabina, did not think so. Sabina (pop. 750), a dusty hamlet high on an Umbrian mountain, was the home of a peasant woman whose "vision" had led to the erection of a shrine, the discovery of show-worthy caverns, and some fantastic exaggeration in Rome's *Messaggero*. From the parochial tumult and the peninsular shouting Don Cesare held himself aloof, something that could not be said of the less conservative newspapers in Europe and America. Correspondents, photographers, and radio broadcasters swarmed up Monte Rotundo, equipped with prodigious expense accounts and even more prodigious thirsts.

For Sabina, the expense accounts, the thirsts, and the nocturnal folkways of the visitors added up to prosperity and social cataclysm. As the journalists showered banknotes on the populace, the peasants abandoned their fields and shops, the rustic lads learned to shoot craps. To prolong the shower of foreign gold, certain leading Sabinites put a hoax over on the journalists. On the male of the species, that is. Helen Teela of New York's *Press*, she of the beautiful dorsal view and unlovely obverse, not only was not taken in, but craftily scooped her colleagues on the truth. To the fireworks of "rockets"—unpleasant telegrams from foreign editors—the correspondents trooped down from the demoralized hill town, leaving the Sabinites to their dust and their unfinished miracle.

Derek Trumbull carries us along to the unexpected finish of the story. It is through the eyes of the cynical English journalist that we see Sabina's miracle whole. Trumbull, ace correspondent of Lord Burnside's *Daily News*, became a friend of Don Cesare, and through him learned that everyone lives by faith, even cynics whose "vision" is a front-page byline.

Mr. Wellard, an American correspondent resident in suburban Rome, handles his metaphysical theme with sensitiveness, compassion, and humor. He treats his peasants with affectionate respect, siding with them in their little cold war on the free representatives of the free press. To the latter he extends neither compassion nor mercy. From the lower depths of his association with newsmen he seems to have dredged up the most unappetizing types, ignorant, arrogant manglers of the fact and the foreign word. As they thrash about in the silken strands of Mr. Wellard's aristocratic prose, some of the figures appear recognizable. Could it be that in this highly entertaining book certain resemblances to the living are not purely coincidental?

The humor in "Journey to a High Mountain" ranges from Don Cesare's delicate philosophical irony to the Rabelaisian hilarity of Delmor Dingell's live broadcast. The broadcast was a farcical mess, and it couldn't happen to a more offensive ambassador of radio honky-tonkery. As for the part that the reviewer's home town plays in the miracle, it is hard to say whether Rochester, N. Y., should take a bow or listen for muffled laughter. Mr. Wellard's humor can get pretty subtle.

Dream Boat

THE CAPTAIN'S LADY. By Basil Heatter. New York: Farrar, Straus & Co. 244 pp. $2.50.

By CATHERINE MEREDITH BROWN

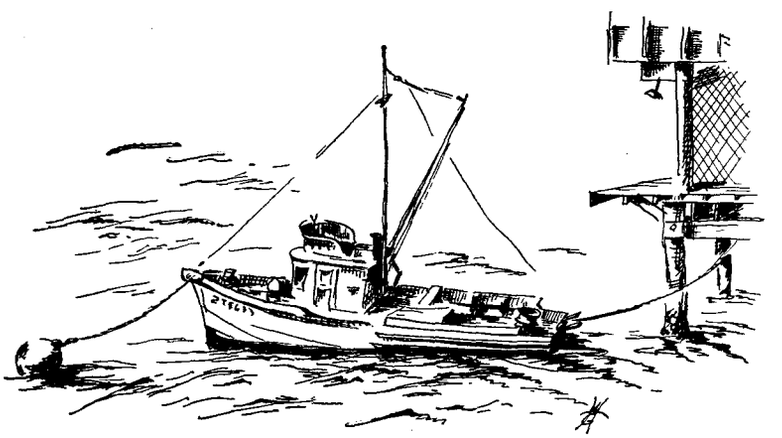
MR. HEATTER is pleased to pose that time-honored, perpetually perplexing question: why do men go to war? The answers are never easy. Nor are they ever final. There is much to be envied in the "happy few" point of view. But it remains rather rare. An increasingly "so what" attitude seems to sugar the bitter pill. In retrospect it simply doesn't add up.

"The Captain's Lady" treats the war in just that retrospect, making for an entirely objective point of view. The result is a terrible emptiness. No recruiting poster material here. No rallying round the flag, no ringing tag lines nor any tear-jerking sentimentality. And the only brutality to be found exists in the postwar world.

Shuttling from present-day Florida to combat in the South Pacific, Mr. Heatter states the case of Greg Cape. A bewildered civilian, Cape joins his brothers in arms, becoming so deeply attached to one that he promises, after all this, to join him in business. This business is to own and operate a fishing charter boat out of Longo, Florida. Choosing the name of their craft from a certain island lady who had shared her favors with each of them equally, the dreamers look to peace. When it comes only Cape is left. He buys a boat; he completes the plans to keep the dreams alive.

It proves a losing battle. The small town is evilly controlled by one ignorant, utterly intolerant racketeer. Law, monopoly, and force rest with him. Bucking this petty tyrant leads to violence, imprisonment, murder, and ultimately the destruction of "The Captain's Lady." Only a little love is left. Not quite enough.

This is a pointed fable, at once vigorous, concise, tough, humorous, and feeling. Mr. Heatter's honest plea for the achieved purpose of the conflict must find willing listeners.



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Hermit with Blacks

BEETLECREEK. By William Demby. New York: Rinehart & Co. 223 pp. $2.50.

By Edmund Fuller

BEETLECREEK is the name given a small Negro community hung on the flank of a larger white town in a region not precisely identified but which might be West Virginia. But if you think this is the wind-up for presenting another routine race novel you are mistaken. A story possessing a unique and original flavor of its own is offered us by William Demby, a new writer of distinct ability and quality. It succeeds remarkably well with certain delicate and difficult relationships, barely skirting sentimentality—the kind of thing Saroyan and Steinbeck sometimes have mangled horribly. But it has strength and range beyond this single aspect, as well.

By one of those unexpected but possible miracles of human change, old Bill Trapp, the white hermit who has lived in isolation in the midst of Beetlecreek for fifteen years, chips his shell and emerges into human warmth. His emergence is most heartwarming and amusing.

But human nature is such that sometimes a man's change for the better crystallizes suspicions and animosities in others that had lain dormant while the familiar pattern remained. So while some talk with admiring surprise of the renascence of Bill Trapp, there are also those who are ready to say: "White man don't live around colored people unless he's wantin' somethin' from them or got somethin' up his sleeve." Perhaps, then, it was only a matter of time, inevitably, before the web is spun around poor old Bill Trapp much the way the skein of malice was woven in Lillian Hellman's "The Children's Hour." And this is the core of the book.

Bill Trapp is vividly realized, deeply conceived. There is fine work in the tracing of his lonely life, his carnival wanderings. There are a few moments, now and then, when Mr. Demby gets sloppy with him, but these are relatively unimportant in so generally excellent a characterization.

But the richness in the book's people is scarcely tapped. Among the Negroes are several unusual studies. The boy, Johnny Johnson, who shares the center of the stage with old Trapp, is created with beauty and understanding. One cannot forget quickly the recoil of his gentle and ethically sensitive nature from the cruelties and juvenile obscenities of the Gang. It is terrible to see this nature—yielding to the fear of not "belonging"—succumb to their destructive vitality as the story mounts to its appalling climax.

—*De Antonis.*

William Demby—"skein of malice."

Daphne Rooke—"velvet-glove puissance."

David Diggs, Johnny's uncle, is another complex portrait, in his frustrating, tortured link with his wife, Mary. Altogether, there are a host of well-realized personalities: Tolley, the barber; Slim, the numbers man; various ladies of the church—more than I can enumerate.

At the end I feel that Mr. Demby, to some extent, has shirked his obligation to the reader, ducked out on his denouement at the critical moment, avoided showdowns which, if faced, might have magnified the book's stature immensely. This, however, is opinion. There exists a school to defend his choice. As it stands, it is a book of interesting and original qualities.

Folks in Zululand

A GROVE OF FEVER TREES. By Daphne Rooke. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co. 246 pp. $2.75.

By John Barkham

ONE of the more unexpected manifestations on our literary scene in the past year or two has been the strange burgeoning of South African fiction. That a population no greater than that of the Borough of Brooklyn should have produced since the war such books as "Cry, the Beloved Country," "King of the Bastards," "Ceremony of Innocence," and others is in itself distinctly unusual. When it is remembered that English is the mother tongue of only half this population the fact becomes downright remarkable.

The role that America has played in this South African flowering is much more significant than is generally appreciated. In the past the few South African books deemed worthy of a world audience almost invariably made their appearance in England and rarely reached the United States. Now the process has been reversed. Publication is now first in the United States, then in England, and finally in South Africa itself. In part this may be attributed to South Africa's present tendency to look to the United States for guidance, but in part it is also symptomatic of America's growing influence in English-language publishing.

"A Grove of Fever Trees" is one of the better products of South Africa's literary resurgence. Written by a young unknown, it was entered in a South African novel contest and carried off the premier award jointly with Elizabeth Charlotte Webster's "Ceremony of Innocence." In the opinion of this reviewer, "A Grove of Fever Trees" can fully hold its own with the better-known Webster book. It is less ambitious, less subtle, less literary, less English, but it possesses more power, color, effective characterization, and sheer narrative force than that book. Above all, it is vastly more indigenous; the red blood that throbs in its veins is unmistakably South African.

"The Grove" is not a pleasant book. The family it tells of, the Ashburns, are as queer and unbalanced a group as has appeared in recent fiction. In this, perhaps, they are not unlike the place they live in, the Thornveld of Zululand, with its violent climate and its hothouse beauty. Danny, the "I" of the story, is a warped embodiment of malice who can kill a dog or his brother with equal indifference. His

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mother can breed pythons for sale and see nothing peculiar in it.

Nobody in the book is really normal, yet such is Miss Rooke's skill in characterization that all of them are living, breathing people. Her secret lies in an intimate knowledge whereof she writes and in a simple, laconic prose style that makes the most outrageous events acceptable. Again and again she achieves a startling effort with a casual phrase that would shock most people. But when she wishes, Miss Rooke can achieve a simple nobility in her descriptions of the Zululand countryside that is reminiscent of Paton, whose Ndotsheni, indeed, is not far from her Tshaneni:

> The evenings on the mountainside were beautiful. Each sound was separated from the other, the lowing and stamping of the nearby cattle, the soft voices of the Zulus. It was a time for prayers, but the Zulus have no prayers. When I lie in bed at night and look out at a patch of velvety sky, I wish I could return to the mountaintop and sit with them once more.

For a first novel, this is a surprisingly poised performance. Admittedly, Miss Rooke's plot and her people are highly colored, being her projection of Nature's violence in her characters. But here, without doubt, is a genuine storyteller who grips and retains the reader's attention from the first page to the last of her brooding tale. Her vivid imagination, virtuoso narrative, and velvet-glove puissance make this a book to remember.

Fiction Notes

NON-SCHEDULED FLIGHT, by R. L. Duffus. Macmillan. $2.50. All things considered, when your number's up it is right that it should be so. There is nothing like the over-all picture to assure us of this fact of final justice. Take a group of travelers bound for Guatemala; analyze them, gauge their qualifications, their achievements, their desires, and their chances for further earthly benefits. Place them on a chartered plane flown by a somewhat aging pilot, shake well, season with understanding, and commit to the flames. The dead have joined the older dead of a past civilization, and the living are granted a new life.

The passenger list is as familiar as the pattern of flight. Still there is the shock of the inevitable crash and the undeniable interest in the distribution of deserts. Decidedly *déjà vue*.

THE BEAUTIFUL BEQUEST, by Eric Hatch. Little, Brown. $2.75. In the accepted manner of the Dybbuk, the

(*Continued on page* 29)

Belles-Lettres.

Last week SRL *reviewed the first two volumes of The Twentieth Century Library, edited by Hiram Haydn, an important new series on the men who shaped the contemporary world. Both dealt with scientists. The first volume in the series to deal with a literary subject is covered on page 19, W. Y. Tindall's deftly balanced consideration of James Joyce. Normally scholars wait at least half a century before undertaking to adjudge the stature of important figures. The other books reviewed below indicate they are running true to form. George Woodcock is trying to unravel "The Paradox of Oscar Wilde." Gilbert Highet in "The Classical Tradition" outlines the ways in which the ancient Greeks and Latins influenced the literature of the Western world. And now that Russia's current literature is of negligible quality, our scholars are evaluating its past, as in Marc Slonim's and Ivar Spector's works reviewed below.*

Slavic Letters Before Stalin

THE EPIC OF RUSSIAN LITERATURE. By Marc Slonim. New York: Oxford University Press. 367 *pp.* $5.

AN INTRODUCTION TO RUSSIAN HISTORY AND CULTURE. By Ivar Spector. New York: D. Van Nostrand Co. 454 *pp.* $6.

By John Cournos

THE Ukrainian peasants had an adage: "When there is no vodka, let's talk about vodka." And so it has come to pass, there being no Russian literature to speak of under Stalin & Co., the critics—those of the West, at any rate—are busily engaged in retailing the glories of those days when Russian literature was one of the Slavic glories, today well worth remembering.

But the Russian literature of the old, proud days is also subject to subdivisions and even sharp breaks in its continuity. Thus, Marc Slonim could not help but follow in the footsteps of D. S. Mirsky in ending the first of his two volumes (the second is yet to come) with the year 1881, which marks the end of an era, "The Golden Age of Russian Literature," as Ivar Spector aptly calls it. In that year Dostoievsky died, the story of the Brothers Karamazov unfinished; two years previously Tolstoy underwent a conversion, more or less disowning his previous works and launching on a career of writing moral tracts, and Turgeniev was still writing his prose poems, significantly entitled "Senilia." A new age was being ushered in, the age of industrialism, the age of the petty bourgeoisie, whose spokesmen were Chekhov, Gorky, Andreiev, etc. Even as Mirsky has done, Mr. Slonim promises to deal with these in his second volume.

Mr. Spector's book differs from Mr. Slonim's in that it does not follow any precise and coordinated plan; it devotes only a relatively small if very interesting portion to literature, covering in eighty-six pages "A Century of Russian Culture 1815-1917," giving up the rest to a history of Russia, beginning with Rurik and concluding with Stalin; while Mr. Slonim, ignoring politics except as a background, begins with the church chronicles of the eleventh and twelfth centuries and progresses to Pushkin and Gogol and the great ones who followed, concluding with Tolstoy.

Mr. Slonim's carefully-thought-out book invites comparison with Mirsky's "History of Russian Literature," which, on the whole, remains my favorite, and this is largely due to the fact that for a Russian Mirsky had a singularly detached mind, which permitted no tendentiousness, the bane of Russian critics, to color his judgment. Russian critics, from the great Belinsky down, have been assiduous in pressing social values on the consciousness of the reader, and Mr. Slonim as well as Mr. Spector, in spite of Western associations, has still something left of the attitude of purveyors of the social message. This does not mean that they ignore form, which they stress in all cases, but they do indubitably reveal a preoccupation with social meanings far greater than is usually shown by Western critics.

Thus, the reader accustomed to Western standards of criticism may read with raised eyebrows Mr. Spector's statement: "Dostoievsky was a genius, while Turgeniev was an artist. Turgeniev achieved his mark through restraint—Dostoievsky through the absence of restraint. Turgeniev was vivid through expression, Dostoievsky through passion. Turgeniev was a man

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of the world, Dostoievsky an innocent. Turgeniev wrote like an innocent, and Dostoievsky like a man of the world." It is easy to see what the critic means, but what Western critic would so distinguish form from meaning? The same reader will consider with some astonishment Mr. Slonim's comparison of Byron with Lermontov, who was heavily under the influence of the English poet. "Many of Lermontov's attitudes," he asseverates, "were certainly affectations, springing from his desire to 'play a role'; this was the extent of his Byronism. But while the English poet brought his artificiality and insincerity even to his poems, Lermontov was utterly sincere in his work." Now which of our critics would ever think of accusing Byron of insincerity? And, indeed, Mr. Slonim's careless statement would lead any reader to draw quite the opposite conclusion as to which poet was insincere. The truth, of course, is that neither was. We gather that what the critic wishes to stress is the characteristically Russian naturalness of Lermontov's work, regardless of the poet's romantic attitude in life.

Mr. Slonim's book contains some excellent criticism, and his remarks about Belinsky and other Russian critics of fame are full of valuable implications for the Western reader. They are, in fact, essential for any understanding of the Russian mind. Thus, we are told that one of the characteristics of Russian intellectuals is to approach ideas "on an emotional as well as a rational level." Moreover, the critic adds, "the Russians seek the immediate application of any theory to life." Again, we are informed that Russia "would never be a country to do things by halves; she was not going to undertake a revolution merely for the sake of replacing Czar Nicholas by a lot of little Czars—members of parliament, judges, and gendarmes." If all this be true, then surely the Voice of America has its work cut out as far as Russia is concerned!

In Ivar Spector's picturesque phrase, what we are today witnessing—he is speaking of Dostoievsky's "The Possessed"—are "Barazovs in action." He would have us believe that the Nazis, principally in the person of the spokesman, Alfred Rosenberg, drew heavily on Dostoievsky's novel for the new Nazi mythology. Both books go to some length to describe the conflict between the Slavophiles and the Westernizers, a conflict which should be of the most profound interest to us. They should be in the hands of everyone interested in Russia and her cultural history.

John Cournos, translator of many Russian works into English, in 1921 published a novel called "The Wall."

Mythic Mazes in "Finnegans Wake"

JAMES JOYCE: His Way of Interpreting the Modern World. By W. Y. Tindall. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 134 *pp.* $2.

By Richard M. Kain

JOYCE is central to any discussion of the modern mind. Wherever one enters the labyrinth, by way of psychology, sociology, or the arts, his figure looms far down the corridor. There is something frightening about the omnipresence of this minotaur. His grand refusals, his auguries, and enigmas induce humility.

Of many approaches to Joyce, each is valid, no one final. Harry Levin's analysis relates the author to the problems of society and places him amid modern literary traditions. Stuart Gilbert's Joyce is the scholarly scholastic, Frank Budgen's the creative artist, shaping his phrases with a painter's careful attention to his medium. Mr. Tindall belongs to the hermetic school of Joseph Campbell. His study touches only briefly upon the early works and summarizes topics formerly studied, such as Joyce's relation to nation, family, church, and art. The major portion of the book is devoted to "Finnegans Wake," and guides us through mythic mazes with the dexterity of an adept, making exhilarating discoveries. If the initiate suffer at times a certain headiness from finding symbol within symbol and cycle upon cycle, he cannot deny that such correspondences were among Joyce's constant preoccupations. That Mr. Tindall maintains his perilous balance and cycles through the air with the greatest of ease is not the least of his accomplishments.

His wide reading enables him to illuminate the range of Joyce's symbolistic awareness. The index suggests a variety of sources, from Aquinas to Bram Stoker. Especially rewarding are insights into Joyce's use of psychoanalysis, myth, and cyclic theories of history. In "Finnegans Wake," which includes everything, he has found much undiscovered treasure.

That Joyce's use of material is often merely verbal is an issue not faced in this study. The only approach to it is the disarming statement "Joyce has a queer mind. He was always seeing analogies." All Joyceans, including this reviewer, must admit that delight in discovery or appreciation of ingenuity can easily become a substitute for esthetic experience and induce a surrender of critical judgment. After identifying Bloom with Moses, Elijah, Jesus, God, and humanity, Tindall's conclusion is a masterpiece of unconsciously humorous understatement: "This must be looked into."

—*Augustus John.*

James Joyce—"symbols within symbols."

It must indeed. Joyce's "boudeloire," combining Baudelaire, boudoir, and mud of the Loire, seems to our guide "not inappropriate." A less reverent admirer might find it simply silly. In Joyce it is always difficult to separate the essential from the trivial, never more so than in his final work.

At times the disciple seems to outdo his master in the quest for analogy. Assuming the validity of Freud's sexual symbolism, he plunges into the maelstrom of "Ulysses" in search of objects male and female. He retrieves such assorted paraphernalia as would delight the most fanatic Freudian, including red triangles on bottles of Bass. Even the most humorless might raise an eyebrow at the results of the 1904 Gold Cup: "Sceptre, the phallic favorite, loses to Throwaway, the outsider, who represents infertility."

As Modern Artist, Joyce himself became a symbol. The "Portrait" and "Ulysses" gave our age two basic and disturbing legends of personal alienation and social disorientation. Whether the more pretentious "Wake" will provide a comparable myth remains to be seen. Problems of exegesis and evaluation remain unsolved. Meanwhile the novel tantalizes, rewards, and mocks the reader. The service of commentators, especially such genial hosts as Tindall, in bringing the undeniable rewards to the surface leaves us in their debt.

Richard M. Kain, professor of English at the University of Louisville, is the author of "Fabulous Voyager," a guide to "Ulysses."

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Clown & Critic

THE PARADOX OF OSCAR WILDE. By George Woodcock. New York: The Macmillan Co. 250 pp. $3.50.

By W. Y. Tindall

OF THE forty or more books on Oscar Wilde, Mr. Woodcock, the author of the forty-second or maybe the forty-third, finds all but two deplorable: Hesketh Pearson's biography and Vincent O'Sullivan's memoir. Frank Harris, Shaw, Sherard, and all the rest quarrel with one another or, when they turn to Wilde, try to whiten or blacken him. Proposing a balanced study — not another biography but an account of Wilde's personality, his writings, and his ideas —, Mr. Woodcock is certainly less partisan than most of his predecessors and somewhat less entertaining.

As his title shows, what fascinates Mr. Woodcock is that split in Wilde's personality which drove him in search for suitable expression to the paradox. Wilde seems an uneasy compound of the clown and poseur with the serious critic of art and society. In the effort to resolve this basic contradiction Mr. Woodcock adopted the dialectical method. Although no Hegelian and still less a Marxist, he proceeds here from thesis to antithesis and at last to a kind of synthesis.

The method proves appropriate. In Mr. Woodcock's hands even the influences that helped to shape Wilde's character seem antithetical. If from his mother he may have acquired a love of dressing up and talking in parlors, from his father, an eminent seducer, he may have acquired the more familiar arts, although, as Mr. Woodcock justly observes, "Oscar never emulated his father's feats with women." If Walter Pater is the thesis of Wilde's Oxford period, John Ruskin is the antithesis. From Pater, that respectable hedonist, Wilde learned to burn ever with a hard, gemlike flame. But, wheeling Ruskin's barrow, he learned social responsibility and pity for suffering mankind. Art for art's sake, with its freedom from social and moral concerns, jostled in Wilde's divided mind with art for the sake of morality.

A serious intention underlay Wilde's clowning in the esthetic cause. Beneath the sunflower, which Mr. Woodcock maintains Wilde did not wear, and beneath the green carnation, which he did wear, he concealed a Victorian hope of reforming society. Frivolities implied his criticism of the middle class. When at his most snobbish—in the plays, for instance, or conversing in the drawing room—Wilde was destroying the society he entertained. These serious intentions

Oscar Wilde—"beneath the green carnation . . . a Victorian hope."

become manifest not only in the "Ballad of Reading Gaol" but in his essay "The Soul of Man Under Socialism," which is a plea for anarchism.

It is anarchism that resolves these contradictions. Although in Mr. Woodcock's opinion Wilde's divided and almost schizoid personality may account on the pathological plane for his comparative failure as man and artist, the logical synthesis which these contradictions demand is that conscious philosophy of individualism in which Wilde differed little from the more rugged members of his class.

This conclusion justifies Mr. Woodcock's method and the structure of his book. Such neatness makes it easy to forgive his faults: his lack, for example, of the historical sense, which might have enabled him to see Wilde as the climax of a long nineteenth-century development; his failure to give adequate weight to Baudelaire, to whom Wilde was indebted for his dandyism, his love of artifice, and his preoccupation with sin. Mr. Woodcock takes no notice of Gautier and the other Frenchmen who obsessed Wilde; he tries to ignore Whistler; and he seems to be unaware of the meaning of decadence, of the importance of impressionism as a critical method, and of Wilde's service in handing down the French symbolist tradition. It is almost as if insularity prevented Mr. Woodcock from recognizing Frenchmen or Americans. And it may be added that a balanced study such as he proposes would have to include as much about Wilde the writer as about Wilde the personality and thinker. But in the matter of Wilde, a subject confused by conflicting evidence and troubled by passions, it is hard to be definitive.

W. Y. Tindall, associate professor of English at Columbia, is author of a new study of James Joyce.

Rainer & Magda

RILKE AND BENVENUTA. By Magda von Hattingberg. New York: W. W. Norton & Co. 193 pp. $3.

By Robert Pick

THE AUTHOR of this book, of Austrian birth, was befriended by that circle of lovers of great art, great music, and great writing which graced the Prussian capital from the early days of the romantic movement. In view of the ruins that are Berlin today and the decay which has devoured German life, the following account reads as though it came out of a fairy tale:

> In Berlin I stayed at the house of the Delbrücks . . . The place of honor in [its] sitting room was occupied by Rodin's "Centaur," while in Delbrück's study was Schadow's marble bust of Frederick the Great. Pictures by famous masters, family heirlooms, beautiful furnishings, and a Bechstein grand piano, adorned the house . . . Frau Berta Delbrück, one of those rare women who radiate peace, happiness, and a sense of security, was very happy when I told her about Rilke. One evening after dinner, when we had listened to music and good talk . . . I read aloud to her from [Rilke's] "Malte Laurids Brigge" . . . Before we parted . . . Frau Delbrück said in a gentle voice: "If only Rilke were with us now! Lonely as he is, I think he would feel a bit at home."

At that time Fräulein Von Hattingberg had, for several months, carried on a correspondence with the poet. It had started with what we would today call a fan letter. Shortly after that evening at the Delbrück home she met Rilke, who had come to Berlin to meet the young woman he had taken to addressing as "Benvenuta" in his missives—"the one who has come at the right hour."

There is another similar episode in literary history — Balzac's famous meeting with Mme. De Hanska in Vienna. But unlike the superficial Polish noblewoman, the worshiping Austrian girl was not disappointed.

> . . . and before me stood Rainer Maria, a slim, dark, almost pathetic figure. His blue eyes looked into mine; I had never seen such a shining, unearthly face.

The exaltedness of their correspondence stood the test of reality. It stood the test of a community that took Magda with Rilke from Berlin to Munich, Innsbruck, Paris, and then to the Adriatic—Duino and its fabulous hostess, Princess Marie von Thurn und Taxis-Hohenlohe.

> [This castle called "Tybein" in the Middle Ages] was [once] the

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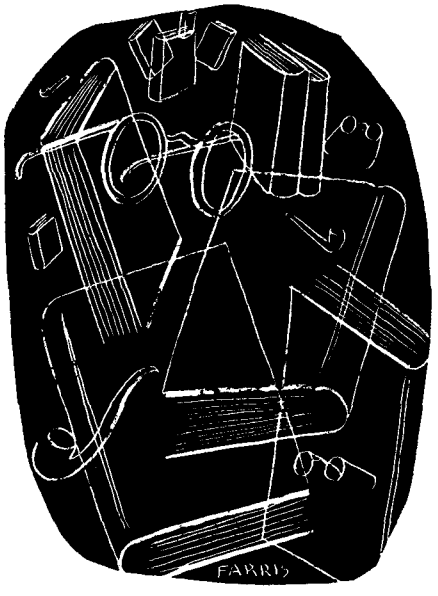
property of a . . . family who held it as liegemen of the Patriarch of Aquileja. Later the Tybeins freed themselves from . . . the patriarch and owed allegiance to the Babenberg Dukes of Austria . . . In the thirteenth century the family died out; the lordship of Duino fell to the Wallsees, and when this family became extinguished, to the House of Austria . . . According to tradition, Dante had stayed [at Duino] as an exile . . . Count Thurn-Valsassina, an ancestor of the princess on her mother's side, bought Duino from Emperor Leopold I, and it had been in the possession of her family for almost 300 years.

In these unique surroundings, immortalized through Rilke's "Duino Elegies," and enjoying as distinguished a company as could be gathered, the poet and his newly won great friend spent the last normal summer allotted to their world. For it was 1914.

From the date of Rilke's first letter to his admirer—"Paris, 26 January 1914"—the reader of this touching memoir undergoes the same feeling we experience when, in Noel Coward's "Cavalcade," the young couple aboard the *Titanic*, stepping back from the railing, uncover to the audience the name of the ship, lettered on the lifebuoy. The descriptions of Rilke's life in this pre-deluge world — the nature and scope of his own concerns and those of his acquaintances, the seemingly deliberate loftiness of their talks, and (if you want to call it that) the ivory-tower spirit of their existence on a continent approaching crisis—may give to the older generation a pang of controversial nostalgia. Younger readers are not unlikely to think Fräulein Von Hattingberg's reminiscences over-romantic, somewhat stilted, or even gushing. But admirers of Rilke of any age group will be grateful to his indefatigable publishers for making the valuable and fascinating material this volume contains accessible in this country.



Our Debt to Rome

THE CLASSICAL TRADITION. By Gilbert Highet. New York: Oxford University Press. 763 pp.. $6.

By C. A. Robinson, Jr.

THIS is one of those rare books that accomplishes several important things at once. Not that the main theme is not big enough in itself, for Gilbert Highet has set himself the unique task of outlining the chief ways in which Greek and Latin influence has molded the literatures of Western Europe and America. Only a very learned man could have attempted this but, fortunately, Highet carries his learning lightly and writes charmingly. In a sense he has given us a series of delightful essays on the world's great authors since the fall of the Roman Empire, but in another sense this is a story of how individual writers were caught up in the crises of their day, in wars and revolutions, plagues and crusades. With the canniness of his Scottish background, Highet has provided a table of contents that runs to twenty-four pages, as if to invite the reader to begin almost anywhere.

The chapter on Dante, for example, is an excursion into the Middle Ages, followed immediately by a picture of man's groping toward classical civilization, a wider horizon, a new mental attitude. This means Petrarch, but instead of presenting a monotonous medley of a writer and his works, Highet makes us feel what it must have been like to have been born in exile and, as a citizen of the world, to have traveled freely and joyously through Italy, France, and the Rhineland. This at a time when you did not visit libraries to discover some new and doubtless small point but to unearth the works of a great man. And so in 1345 Petrarch found in the cathedral library of Verona a manuscript containing a vast number of Cicero's personal letters, copied them out in his own hand, and settled down to an exhaustive study of a many-sided character, which, through him, became one of the forces that formed the Renaissance ideal of humanism.

Professor Highet brings his absorbing study down through the centuries to Joyce, Eliot, and Gide. If we learn how professional classicists rattled dry bones until they killed a great subject (in so far as they had the power), we also see that much of the best poetry and prose written in Western countries represents a continuous stream flowing from its source in Greece to the present day. Civilization, Highet reminds us, is the life of the mind. Though the Romans built a vast empire of tremendous power and wealth, they did not rest content with an achievement that would have left them as dead as the Assyrians. They realized that civilization means education and set about getting an education in literature from the Greeks. Greece was not as rich as Egypt nor as powerful as Persia, but it did create permanent possessions for the mind and passed them on to the Romans and hence to us, so that if we choose, we may enrich and enjoy our only imperishable possession, our soul.

C. A. Robinson, Jr., professor of classics at Brown University, is author of "Hellenic History," "Alexander the Great," and other books.

Belles-Lettres Notes

FRANZ KAFKA AND PRAGUE, by Pavel Eisner. Golden Griffin Books, New York. $3. This essay helps to explain the enigmatic personality and writings of Kafka by describing the influence of his environment on him and his works. He was raised in a spiritual ghetto of some complexity. As an alien German among Czechs, and as an alien Jew among Germans and Czechs, he suffered from a double rootlessness. It affected not only the plots of his stories, with their strange hallucinatory atmosphere, but his characters and his very language. All this is set forth with abundant insight and proportion by Mr. Eisner, who recognizes that his is not the only key to unlock Kafka. But his pretentious and pedantic style has not been improved by his translators, and his book is eccentrically set up and adorned with beautiful but irrelevant photographs of Prague.

THE AMERICAN HISTORICAL NOVEL, by Ernest E. Leisy. University of Oklahoma Press. $3.75. Whatever qualities the American historical novel may lack, it has the quality of being widely read and for that reason at least it deserves an intelligent and documented study such as this. Professor Leisy chooses his examples from the rise of the genre, in the early nineteenth century, and follows it down to 1949—which enables him to include such first-rate novels as those of A. B. Guthrie, Jr. Grouping them by their historical backgrounds, he starts with Colonial America and proceeds through the Revolution, the Westward movement, the Civil War, and ends with the period of national expansion up to the Spanish-American War. He treats a vast number of books and adds a long appendix for the overflow. Both as a bibliography and as a significant analysis his book is valuable. —Robert Halsband.

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Seeing Things

ACADEMICIAN EXTRAORDINARY

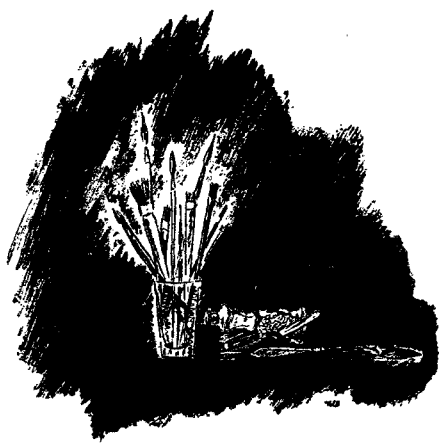
THE STYLE is the man. Of writers we know this to be true, and certainly of no writer is it truer than of Winston Churchill. But is it equally true of painters? Of most painters yes, though not of Mr. Churchill. In this, as in nearly everything else, he is exceptional. If his personality and activity were known to us only by the eighteen colored reproductions of his brush work included in "Painting as a Pastime,"* we would, to put it mildly, be misled.

These Churchill paintings are not the products of an amateur who mistakes a filled canvas for a good one. Their touch is professional. Their colors are pleasant and bright, even if in some of the landscapes they are almost too pretty-pretty in a postcard manner. Most of these pictures have a certain charm, and a few can claim more than this, possessed as they are of real delicacy and grace.

Nevertheless, were all we know of Mr. Churchill to be deduced from these paintings, we would indeed be misled. Our first guess, our inevitable guess, would be that the man who had done them must be a Royal Academician. The paintings are sufficiently conventional to persuade us of this. So far, of course, we would be right because Mr. Churchill is a member of the Royal Academy; in fact, he is the only part-time painter on its roster. On it he is listed, with accuracy, as Honorary Academician Extraordinary.

From then on, however, our surmises would be wrong. For we would swear the man who did these paintings must be a soft-spoken fellow, calm and mousy, and very much at peace in a peaceful world. We would assume that his schedule was uncrowded, his life unrushed. We would suspect him of avoiding action and of having been protected from violence of any sort. We would know that he had traveled, but we would imagine him as creeping quietly into one sleepy resort after another, seeking the sun's warmth and finding inner tranquility.

Dedicated as his thinking would seem to be to flower arrangements, aristocratic interiors, quaint fishing vessels securely beached or moored, waveless lakes, dreamy mountains, and trees unblown by any breezes, we would feel safe from contradiction were we to state that his mind was tightly shut against every kind of storm and bolted against upheavals, naval, military, and political. We might be tempted to go even further and maintain, since all his chairs, little boats, beaches, groves, and rooms are without occupants (except in two canvases where it is difficult to tell



whether the people are male or female, mortals or penguins), that he had no interest in men and no knowledge of their tempestuous ways. In short, we would be persuaded that here was an artist, lacking in gusto but appreciative of nature, whose unruffled temperament was forever in a vacation mood.

Such deductions would, of course, be almost wholly false. Few painters have put as little of themselves into their paintings as Mr. Churchill has done. There is a reason for this. He has turned to oils not only to take a vacation but to take a vacation from himself. Even if this had not been his reason, how could Mr. Churchill or anyone else be expected to do full justice on canvas to the many lives he has lived, his multitude of talents, the countless adventures he has survived, or the dimensions of his spirit?

No known colors are sufficiently strong to suggest his colorful personality. No wall or ceiling is large enough to contain the tumultuous mural of his careers. Paintings by Mr. Churchill are one thing; paintings which would be truly Churchillian, quite another. To achieve Churchillian stature, they would have to possess something of the muscularity of Michelangelo, the vitality without the fleshiness of Rubens, the historical sweep of Le Brun, David's interest in court pageantry, the energy of Gericault, the romanticism of Delacroix, the drama of Goya, Meissonier's eye for military details, the dash of Sargent, Winslow Homer's and Tom Lea's feeling for ships and the sea, and the informed accuracy of the combat artists in all the services who, during wartime, recorded the trials of men in uniform.

Mr. Churchill is one of this planet's most flamboyant figures. He is an anachronism not because his politics are so conservative but because his endowments are so varied. The past, however, has never made a richer, livelier, or more vital contribution to the present than in his case. In many respects Mr. Churchill is the greatest of the Edwardians; in others, the last of the greater Elizabethans. The smokescreen created by his cigars cannot hide the fact that he has faced our world and enriched it as a reincarnation of the Renaissance Man. Certainly, for sheer virtuosity we have not seen his equal in our time, nor are parallels in other epochs easy to find.

Had the Duke of Marlborough been the Elder Pitt and the Elder Pitt, Gibbon, the result might have been named Winston Churchill. Mr. Churchill is a writing man who is a man of action; a soldier who turned war correspondent; a war correspondent who entered politics; a politician who emerged as a statesman; a statesman who excels as a strategist, and an orator whose words have been worth battalions. He is an historian who has made even more history than he has written. His energies are furious, his courage without limits, and his appetite for living so enormous that once someone rightly said life has melted in his mouth like butter.

CONSIDERING everything else that he has managed to get done, it is not surprising that he should have also found time to paint. Nor is it surprising that the two delectable essays "Hobbies" and "Painting as a Pastime," now joined together under the title of the latter, should have first appeared in a book by Mr. Churchill called "Amid These Storms" (1932). There they concluded with the sudden hush of an armistice a volume all turbulence and battle. Since it was chiefly devoted to such matters as murderous anarchists, political clashes, meetings with the Kaiser at two maneuvers before World War I, memories of trench warfare in 1916, the U-Boat menace, and an account of Mr. Churchill's experiences in the air in 1912, when avia-

(*Continued on page* 39)

*PAINTING AS A PASTIME. By Winston S. Churchill. New York: Whittlesey House. 32 pp. 18 color plates. $2.50.

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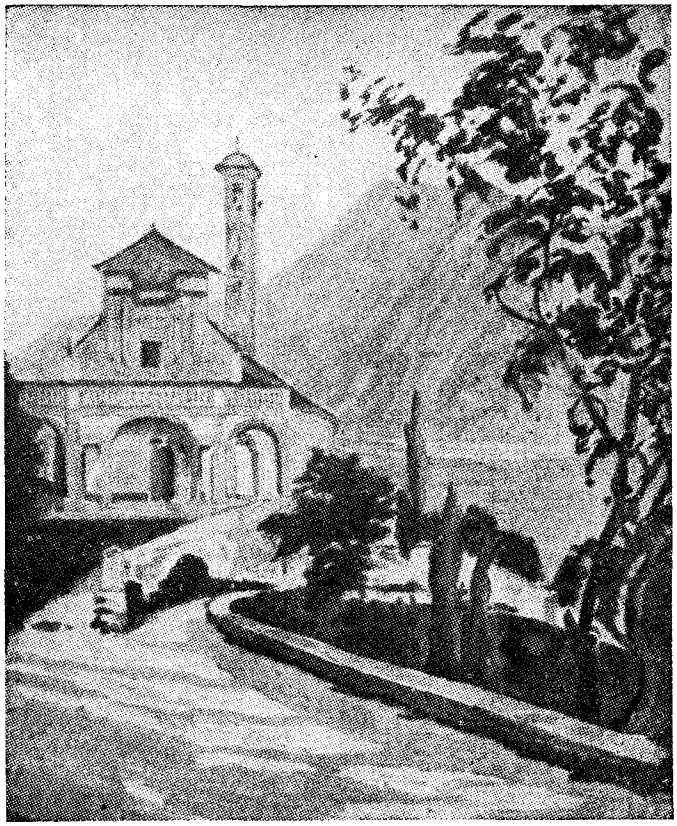
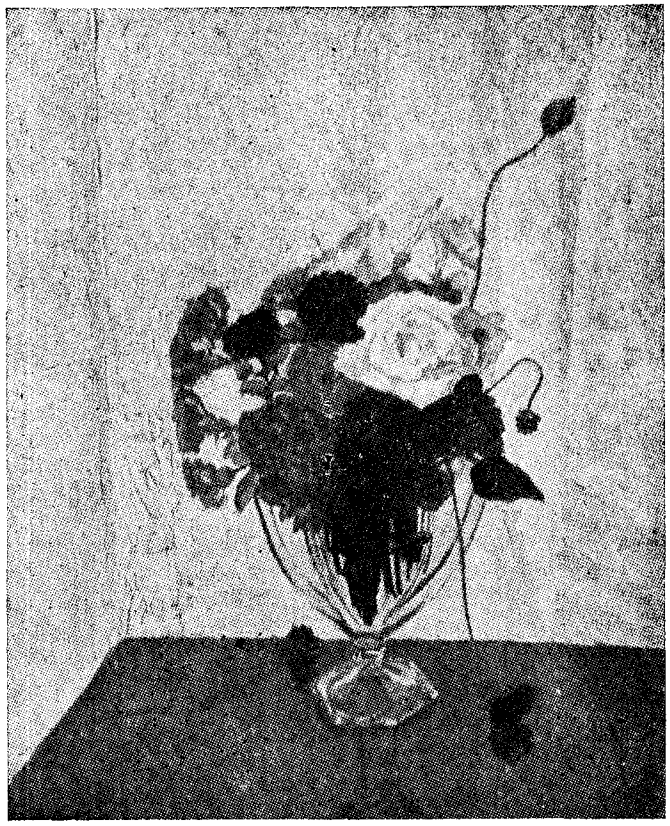
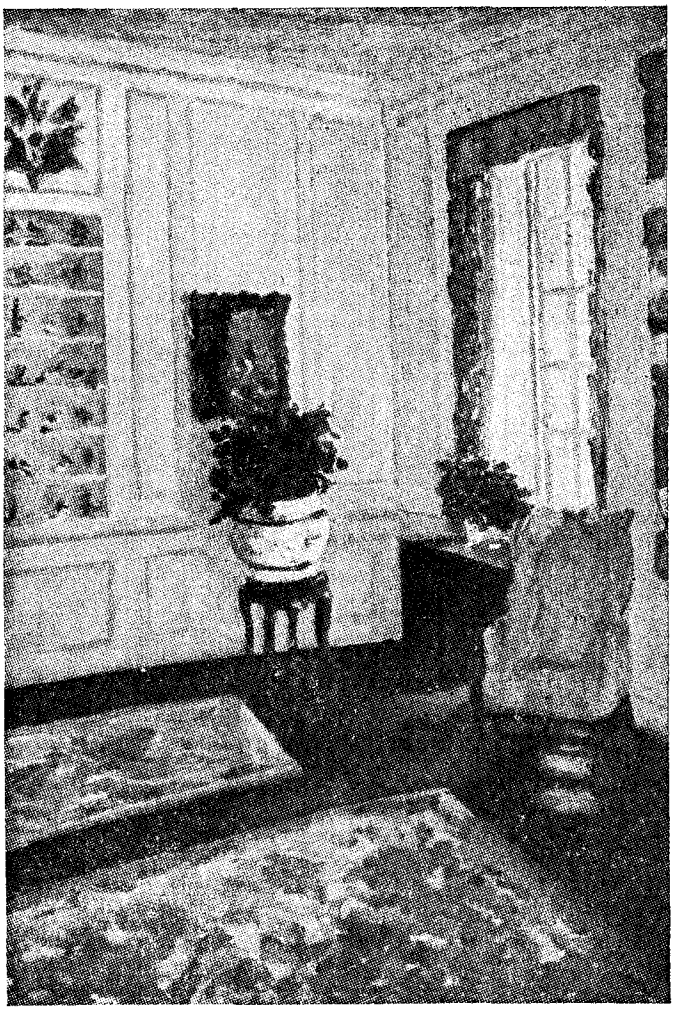


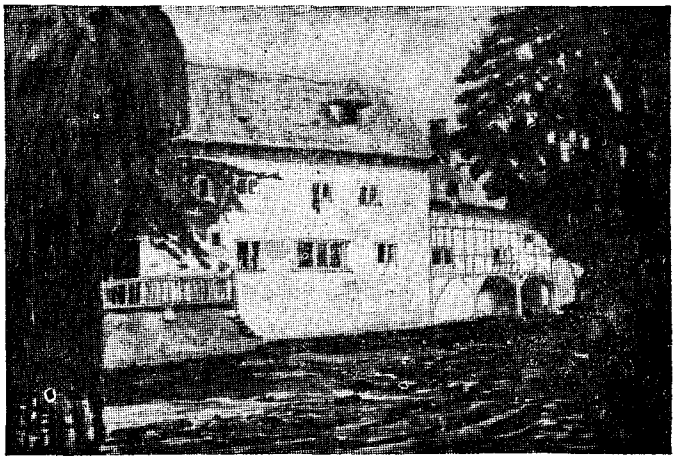
Church by Lake Como, September 1945.



Flowers painted in the studio at Chartwell.



"The Blue Room," exhibited at the Royal Academy, 1948.



"The Mill," Saint-Georges-Motel, Normandy.

—From "Painting as a Pastime."

Village near Lugano, September 1945.

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The Saturday Review of Literature

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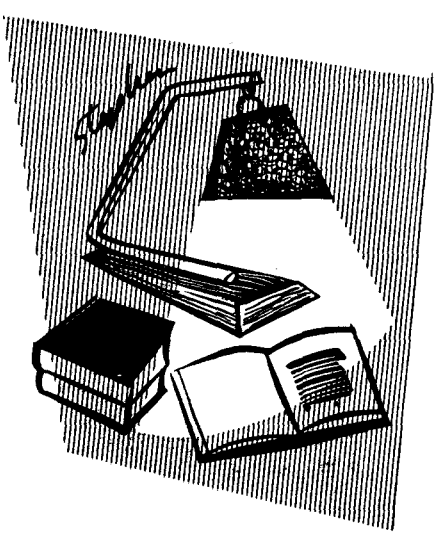
Lock, Stock & Barrel

THE ANNOUNCEMENT that Yale University, under the auspices of its great library, had taken over the administration of the Bollingen Awards to poetry, is gratifying to the editors of the *SRL*, who had for so many months protested against last year's prize to Ezra Pound for his "The Pisan Cantos." We congratulate Yale on the opportunity it will have in the future to advance the cause of American poetry, and we also applaud the Government for getting rid in so pleasant a manner of an obligation it never should have assumed. Since August, when the Library of Congress had been requested by a Congressional Committee to disassociate itself from all prizes and awards, this yearly prize to poets granted by the philanthropic trust established by Paul W. Mellon has been a foundling who had to find a home somewhere else than under the majestic dome of the American Capitol.

Our readers will recall that through the months of the debate that followed Robert Hillyer's articles "Treason's Strange Fruit" and "Poetry's New Priesthood" [*SRL* June 11, June 18, 1949] and the publication of a long series of editorials and letters we had objected primarily to the fact that the Bollingen Awards had been placed in the hands of a jury composed of the Fellows in American Letters in the Library of Congress, a group of poets and critics, self-nominating and self-perpetuating, who were therefore enabled to dispense a yearly prize which, any way you looked at it, amounted to a national award. The Library of Congress is owned by the people of the United States and is administered by Congress itself. The acceptance of a gift from the Bollingen Foundation was a dangerous precedent, for before this no department of the United States Government had assumed such a prerogative.

Weeks before *The Saturday Review* entered into the ring the public was aroused by this extraordinary event; indignant letters were appearing in newspapers, Congressmen were receiving demands for an explanation, and one or two magazines had entered the battle. It was a counterfeit coin with two faces that the Fellows in American Letters had minted. The obverse side was even more disagreeable to the public.

Why had this admittedly distinguished group of fourteen Fellows in American Letters placed a laurel wreath on the brow of Ezra Pound, a man who had been a traitor to his country during the war and for long before that a mouthpiece for Mussolini's brand of Fascism? No one could be more aware than these poets and critics that his trial in Washington had been ended by the announcement that he was insane, and that there was reason to assume that the Government had chosen in this way to escape from the disagreeable duty of declaring him guilty and punishing him under a law that would send him to his death or life imprisonment. They were also aware that the Bollingen Prize was specifically granted not for an author's life work, but for a volume of poetry published during a single year. As time went on it was obvious that few of the members of the jury were willing to defend their choice of "The Pisan Cantos" as the best volume of verse of the year. Even disregarding their belief that the expression of inhuman and repugnant ideas has nothing to do with the merit of a work of art, that art itself can be divorced both from life and from morality, there was almost no defense on their part of the Cantos as a book of poetry that deserved to be honored in this distinguished manner.



Indeed, in all of the writing and speaking that have followed this dismal and egregious error there has never been any explanation of how and why the fourteen Fellows in American Letters made a choice that has finally driven this award from the Library of Congress. What cause in the name of art were they defending, or was it simply a final affectionate gesture toward a man who had once been great and who, with T. S. Eliot, had founded "modern" poetry on whatever rock it now stands? There will perhaps never be any answer to the questions we asked.

THE most significant result we achieved was to bring the question of modern poetry before a wide public. It was discovered that while volumes of verse, with the exception of the work of a few established older poets, were not being purchased or read by any considerable number of people, nevertheless there existed a profound desire and love for poetry throughout the country. Paper-bound anthologies sell in the hundreds of thousands; the hundreds of letters addressed to this magazine gave us the assurance that the kind of poetry which seemed to be established as the highest art by this particular group in the Library of Congress caused bewilderment and even anger in the hearts of men and women who refused to read any longer the yearly outpourings of the "non - representational poets," who only too often recommend and review and preface each other's works. It was time that the public was allowed to enter the contest, to judge for itself. It was time that the way was cleared, in the words of last year's Pulitzer Prize winner, Peter Viereck, "for poets and readers both to make sincere efforts toward mutual understanding, to end the schism between them by restoring communication."

The establishment of the Fellows in American Letters in the Library of Congress has served its purpose. Under any other auspices the Bollingen Award to Ezra Pound would have resulted in a tempest in a literary teapot. The *SRL* would never have entered into the debate if the prize had been granted by any poetry society or university. Our long and sometimes tempestuous campaign has ended and, in spite of the animosities it has aroused, the proof of its success lies in the assumption of the Bollingen Awards by the Library of Yale University, which has taken over this prize and its jurors, lock, stock, and barrel. We can hope that in the course of time a few poets closer to the public's desire will find their way into the arcana. —H. S.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Yamashita Orphanage Fund

SIR: I am glad to inform you that a committee of trustees has been established to act as general overseer for the Yamashita Orphanage Fund and as general go-between for the orphanage and the American people.

The first meeting was held on December 6, to discuss the principles on which the committee is to function. It has been agreed that your suggestions on the setting up of this fund on a continuing basis are most proper and that the committee will proceed along that line.

SHINZO HAMAI,
Mayor.

Hiroshima, Japan.

EDITOR'S NOTE: *Photographs of orphans together with complete biographical data are now being forwarded to all those who volunteered to support an atomic bomb orphan under the "moral adoption" plan. If there are other readers who wish to "adopt" a Japanese child, please write to this office. All checks must still be sent to* SRL *for deposit in a New York bank, made out to the order of "Yamashita Orphanage Fund." We wish to thank all those who have faithfully kept up their payments. A further report on the Hiroshima "moral adoptions" will be published in these pages shortly.*

Flagstad, Art & Principles

SIR: Irving Kolodin, in his column headed "Bing, Flagstad, Traubel, and Others" [MUSIC TO MY EARS, *SRL* Feb. 11], admits that Flagstad's "qualities are close to unique" and asks: "But is art so important that principle must be abandoned?"

I should like to ask Mr. Kolodin, in turn, what "principle" has been abandoned in the Met's re-engagement of Kirsten Flagstad, acclaimed by many as the greatest singer of the century? If there is any real moral principle involved, I should like for once to see it fairly stated, in clear, rational terms, uncolored by prejudice of any kind.

Mme. Flagstad's voice is a gift of God; in addition, she is, to my knowledge and belief, a woman of the highest personal integrity. If she was guilty in 1941 of the one slight charge which could be fairly stated against her, that of a possible error of judgment in thus returning to a beloved husband, home, and family in danger, many a woman who knows the meaning of love and loyalty would not only forgive, but rise to defend her.

Devotees of Wagnerian music-drama, who for nine years have hoped that Kirsten Flagstad would return to the Metropolitan, are deeply grateful to Mr. Bing for his determined stand on behalf of art against an inapplicable principle.

DOROTHY HOBSON.

New York, N. Y.

SIR: Does Mr. Kolodin know that the majority of operagoers want Flagstad back at the Metropolitan? Does he know that the great cities of Europe, and especially London and Paris, have welcomed her back with a great show of affection and enthusiasm? Does he know that Bruno Walter is going back to the Metropolitan next year to conduct when she sings "Fidelio"?

The cheap display of picketing in front of Carnegie Hall before Flagstad's last concerts there was enough to make all of us who attended the concert utterly ashamed. Such vulgar, tasteless stupidity is beyond belief. What is this dreadful crime that Flagstad is committing? She is giving us the opportunity of hearing her glorious voice once again at the Metropolitan. Let us have as much of it as she is willing to give! Have these people ever heard her sing? Can they know what they are talking about? I think not. It just isn't possible.

NINA HARTER.

Brooklyn, N. Y.

"Don't you think it's about time you struck out for yourself?"

An Ear for Music

SIR: Your new department MUSIC TO MY EARS is a fine addition to your already noteworthy publication. For us who live in the hinterlands there is need for some publication to sponsor a department that will give us a review of musical events in New York City.

ALFRED A. THAL.

Bismarck, N. D.

Century-old Fever

SIR: Under the stimulation of H. A. Overstreet's article "The Gentle People of Prejudice" [*SRL* Jan. 21], Gerald W. Johnson wrote in his views on the subject [LETTERS, *SRL* Feb. 11]. Being a native of Baltimore also, and a Negro, I would like to do likewise using *his* letter as a stimulus.

Negroes are not a race apart from the rest of the country, any more than "Americans" are a race apart from the rest of the civilized world. Any differences are environmental and nothing else. There is no such thing as "the Negro." We are not a "mass" because of ancestral bonds, but because outside pressure in the form of prejudice keeps us that way.

This country would be much closer to racial understanding if people like Mr. Johnson would realize that it is impossible to treat the problem of prejudice fairly as long as Negroes are regarded as a mass of thirteen million savages, second-class citizens, wronged souls, or anything whatever. Each Negro is a separate individual and should be considered in the light of his personal character and qualifications. As an individual he reacts to our civilization in the same manner as any member of the other "race," if he is given the chance. Those who have managed to slip over the wall of prejudice (Mr. Johnson improperly lumps them together as "exceptionally gifted") have proven this, I think.

It may surprise Mr. Johnson to learn that Negroes think of themselves as individuals. It should help him understand why cold statistics, such as the fact that the number of lynchings has dropped so much in fifty years, might not impress a Negro farmer in a certain Southern state as much progress. To him, each one of those three who were lynched in 1949 is just as dead as each of the 100-plus who were lynched in 1905. He knows that as long as even one lynching is possible his life can be in danger. For the same reason a qualified bookkeeper, who is refused a job at his trade by a certain company because of his color, doesn't cheer when that same company agrees to hire Negro porters.

Referring to the "white South" as a "convalescent" whose fever has "been subsiding for a considerable period," Mr. Johnson advises that there is hope. That's fine for the "white South," but

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where does that leave me, a Negro Southerner? I'm not sick so why do I have to suffer? This fever has been going on for almost 100 years and the slow progress of the patient indicates it will last at least that much longer.

Perhaps if I could think of myself as a member of a "mass," this would seem like a brief span. However, as an individual, I don't expect to be around 100 years from now. Therefore, I am going to do all I can to gain my full rights as a human being *now*, and more power to H. A. Overstreet and everyone else who is in my corner.

In conclusion, Mr. Johnson expresses his concern about the cost of being unprejudiced. I wonder if he has ever thought of the cost of being the object of prejudice—not only in money, prestige, and labor, but in self-respect?

KENNETH PITTMAN.

Baltimore, Md.

Unflattering Stereoscope

SIR: In view of your concern about the effect of American movies in foreign lands ["The Free Ride," *SRL* Jan. 21, 28, Feb. 4] you may be interested in this excerpt from the diary of a French missionary in Mongolia in 1866:

> I am certain our sulphur matches, sold cheaply everywhere, are destinued to produce a high opinion of the European mind, but it is to be profoundly regretted that the stereoscopic photographs, which could contribute so much in showing the advantages of our civilization, are for the most part indecent and even obscene. Merchants find it pays to flatter evil tendencies and low passions, but this is to the detriment of the morals and honor of the Europeans.

The quotation comes from "Abbe David's Diary," edited by Helen M. Fox, and published by Harvard University Press.

BEATRICE E. KYDD.

New Haven, Conn.

Filling Orwell's Shoes?

SIR: Why does Harrison Smith say [*SRL* Feb. 4] that George Orwell will be hard to replace? There are at least ten who can slip into his literary place without causing a ripple—Huxley, Wylie, Auden, Isherwood, Waugh, to name a few.

"Nineteen Eighty-four" was merely a clever rehash of Huxley's "Brave New World." Huxley said it much earlier and much better. However, this is no reflection on Orwell. Such good things bear repeating.

L. W. MICHAELSON.

Denver, Colo.

SIR: In your fine tribute to George Orwell there is one error. You state that when he fought in the Spanish revolution he joined the Anarchists. According to his book "Homage to Catalonia," he was affiliated with the POUM militia. The POUM (Partido Obrero de Unificación Marxista) were heretical Communists, both anti-Stalin and repudiated by Trotsky; certainly they were not Anarchists.

JOHN F. RAMSEY.

Tuscaloosa, Ala.

NEW EDITIONS

"THE Collected Tales of Walter de la Mare" (Knopf, $4.50), edited and introduced by Edward Wagenknecht, gives us twenty-four stories by one of the most gifted, conscientious, and versatile story-tellers of our time. Mr. De la Mare is best known, perhaps, for his imaginative, delicate, tentative probings of the mysteries of life and human character, for fiction that seeks to cross the frontiers of the sensory world, that says, in the words of his character Seaton: "I mean I know that what we see and hear is only the smallest fraction of what is." But one need look no farther than "The Orgy: An Idyll" to realize that Mr. De la Mare's range is remarkably wide, for this story of Philip Pim's heroic spending spree in a great London department store, at his uncle's expense, might well have been conceived by P. G. Wodehouse, who would no doubt have written it in very different words, but who could not have written it with more verve or humor. Between the extremes of "The Orgy" and the haunting spiritual history called "The Connoisseur" we find tales of many kinds, almost every one of them excellent in its own way, and no recurrent formulas. The author's meanings cannot always be caught and catalogued like butterflies—Mr. Wagenknecht did well to place "The Riddle" at the beginning of his volume—but there is always artistic communication even when precise meanings are elusive. Among Mr. De la Mare's talents is his ability to score by what he leaves unsaid as well as by what he says: see "Missing" for a demonstration. His one important failing, I think, is a tendency to overwrite somewhat and a secondary fault is that his conscious devotion to stylistic beauty leads him rarely, but only rarely, into an appearance of affectation. When he is not so led astray he is, of course, one of the finest of living English stylists.

"The Portable Medieval Reader," recently noticed in this column, is largely concerned with the life of the Middle Ages. "Medieval Literature in Translation" (Longmans, Green, $6), edited by Charles W. Jones, is, as its title states, devoted to the literature of the Middle Ages. I suggest that the two books, one small and the other big, would go well together on a library shelf, if not side by side at least not far apart. Mr. Jones finds room in his thousand pages for an extraordinary collection of diverse, enduring writing, composed over a period of a thousand years. Here, among many other selections, are passages from Augustine's "Confessions" and Villon's "Ballade of the Women of Paris"; Dante's "New Life" and Goliardic strophes by the Archpoet; passages from "The Divine Comedy," Snorri Sturluson's "The Prose Edda," "The Tragical Death of the Sons of Usnach," Hrotswitha's "Paphnutius," selections from Geoffrey of Monmouth's "Histories of the Kings of Britain," Caedmon's "Hymn," and the anonymous "Seafarer"; Abelard's story of his own life, love, and learning; Marie de France's "Sir Launfal," and the second part of "Beowulf"; Walafrid Strabo's song of the ninth-century wandering scholar, and Marco Polo's report of "the great and wonderful magnificence of the Great Kaan." In his introductory notes to the several sections and many authors Mr. Smith proves himself a sure and genial guide, and his bibliographies will prove useful to those who wish to follow reading with study.

In "The Conversations of Dr. Johnson," included in John Lehmann's the Chiltern Library ($3.50), Raymond Postgate has done a good job of skimming the cream from Boswell's "Life." For those who want the full text of the famous biography at a low price, there is the new two-volume Everyman's Library edition (Dutton, 95¢ ea.), with an introduction by S. C. Roberts and a full index. Another highly entertaining Chiltern volume is Smollett's "Travels Through France and Italy" ($3.50), with an introduction by Osbert Sitwell. "They order, said I, this matter better in France," declared Sterne at the outset of "A Sentimental Journey." Smollett was of the contrary opinion, and his prejudice gave vigor to his pen. Particularly interesting is his lively account of the French and Italian Rivieras as they were almost 200 years ago.

—BEN RAY REDMAN.

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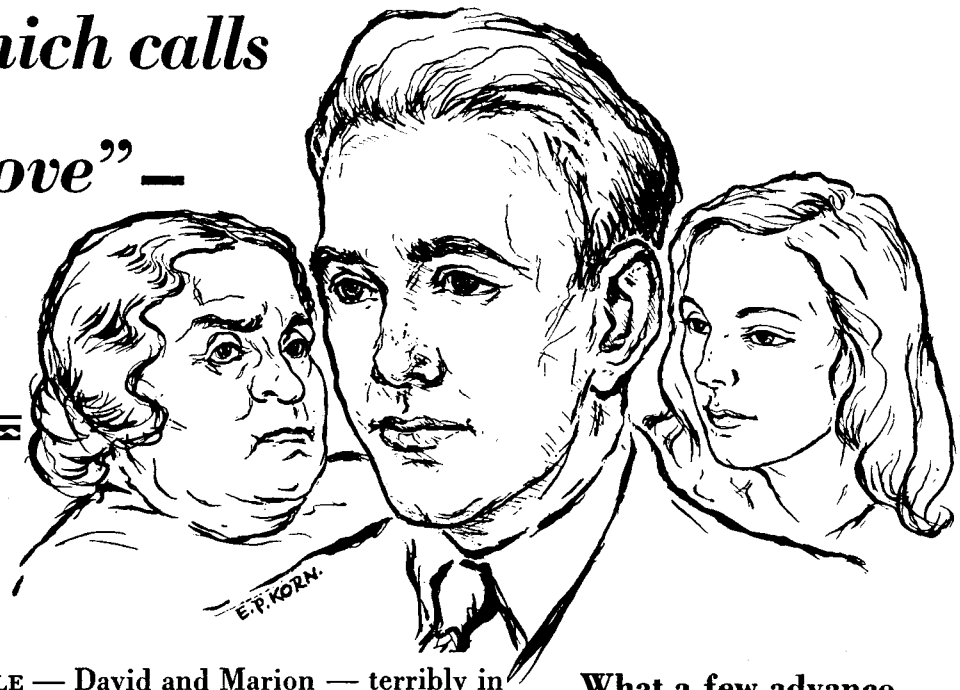
There is no cruelty, no selfishness like that which calls itself "love"—



TWO YOUNG PEOPLE — David and Marion — terribly in love, and kept from each other by a mother's blind ambition, are not just characters in a book. They are real — you will see people like them standing next to you in the subway, books under their arms, talking eagerly with their delight in each other shining out of their eyes; or you will see them in the cheap seats at Carnegie Hall, or at a basketball game, or walking hand in hand on a Spring night under the shadow of the big bridge up on Washington Heights. And you will be greatly moved by what happens to them — for they are so young and so pitifully helpless against the forces that are stacked up against them.

David Brown's mother had come from the Old World. Because she loved her son she wanted him to have all the good things in life her stooped and worried furrier husband had failed to achieve. And in Mama's book success meant making big money, working for no boss but being a great lawyer, "like Max Steuer." What David himself wanted didn't matter. And that went for Marion, too.

So David became a lawyer. He did it the hard way—working days in a department store, forcing himself to stay awake in class at night. He graduated at the head of his class—but he found out that there was no place in the big, successful law offices for the son of a poor Jewish immigrant. And in desperation he took the only job that was open to him, one in the twilight zone of unimportant lawyers, petty cases, chiselers, and gangsters. He didn't even dare tell Mama. . . .

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LOOK AT THE MESSAGE

(*Continued from page* 13)

lishes a list of American films shown in Paris during the past few months. These are the films which, by and large, are said by Mr. Johnston to speak for America. Examination of this list will indicate whether the motion-picture industry is deluding itself when Mr. Johnston declares that "foreign audiences are getting a balanced diet" or that our pictures reflect the "vast mosaic of personalities, communities, geography, background, and habits."

Would Mr. Johnston be willing to check his conviction that our films fairly represent America against the opinions of a cross-section of the American public? Would he be willing to put the same question to Americans who have traveled abroad?

TO sum up: in flatly denying even the existence of a special problem on export film, Mr. Johnston has deliberately or otherwise disregarded the various activities within the industry itself—principally the work of the Export Division of his office—as well as the continuing concern of the State Department. He publicly claims that the same policy which serves American audiences is perfectly suited for foreign audiences, despite all the evidence to the contrary.

As for myself, I stand my ground—not, however, without acknowledging my failure to mention certain quality films, and also my failure to call attention to the good work done in Germany and Japan under such men as Arthur Mayer and Colonel Donald R. Nugent.

I have high regard for Mr. Johnston, and nothing that I have said in this article is intended to reflect on his own integrity or honesty. He is spokesman for an industry which, as I pointed out earlier in my editorials, is hyper-sensitive to outside criticism but is apparently not cohesive or mature enough to face up frankly to its shortcomings in the field of the public interest. No medium of communications or entertainment in the world exercises the power—actual or potential—of the motion picture. No medium can claim the attentions of as many millions of people for such uninterrupted periods of time each week or each month. And, as it concerns the war of ideas today, no medium is as effective in projecting America for foreign audiences. Which leads to the basic question: is its sense of public responsibility comparable with its position of public power?

"Projection of America"

A complete list of American films shown in Paris during the past three months—"balanced diet" or "mountainous mediocrity"?

"The Dark Past"
"Strike Up the Band"
"Holiday in Mexico"
"Hellzapoppin"
"Background to Danger"
"Outpost in Morrocco"
"Song of the South"
"The Life of Riley"
"The Wistful Widow of Wagon Gap"
"Hail the Conquering Hero"
"Too Late for Tears"
"Air Raid Warden"
"Bride of Vengeance"
"Jungle Jim"
"Eagle Squadron"
"Mr. Belvedere Goes to College"
"Citizen Kane"
"Northern Pursuit"
"Unfaithfully Yours"
"Invisible Agent"
"I Married a Witch"
"Air Force"
"A Lady Takes a Chance"
"Valley of the Sun"
"The Adventures of Mark Twain"
"It's a Great Feeling"
"The Return of October"
"Bad Boy"
"The Miracle of Morgan's Creek"
"Abbott and Costello in Hollywood"
"Who Done It?"
"The Lady Has Plans"
"The Lady in Ermine"
"Blue Skies"
"The Big Shot"
"Tap Roots"
"The Three Caballeros"
"Northwest Mounted Police"
"Down to Earth"
"Pride and Prejudice"
"Up in Arms"
"Hit the Ice"
"Miracle on 34th Street"
"California"
"Carnegie Hall"
"Louisiana Story"
"The Unseen"
"Saigon"
"The Window"
"Africa Screams"
"Black Bard"
"Johnny Belinda"
"Married but Single"
"A Foreign Affair"
"Canyon Passage"
"Saratoga Trunk"
"The Set-Up"
"A Woman's Vengeance"
"Forever Amber"
"That Mad Mr. Jones"
"Albuquerque"
"The Snake Pit"
"The Big Clock"
"June Bride"
"The Search"
"They Were Expendable"
"Ziegfeld Follies"
"Ride the Pink Horse"
"They Won't Believe Me"
"Blossoms in the Dust"
"Lulu Belle"
"Come Live with Me"
"Background to Danger"
"Going My Way"
"The Kid from Brooklyn"
"Ninotchka"
"The Avenger"
"Swing Circus"
"To the Ends of the Earth"
"Tarzan and the Huntress"
"Fort Apache"
"Killer MacCoy"
"Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves"
"Fear in the Night"
"The Seventh Cross"
"It's a Wonderful Life"
"The Outlaw"
"Nightmare Alley"
"The Return of Monte Cristo"
"The Secret Behind the Door"
"Men of Two Worlds"
"Child Bride"
"The Corpse Came C. O. D."

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spirit of an Irish pugilist invades the body of John Kennedy, Milquetoast bank clerk of Oakwood, Long Island. Thus fortified with Irish courage and frequent shots of Jamieson whisky, the worm turns completely. Losing his ill-paid job and his stylish fiancee, he gains employment, true love, and a profession based on his haunted inheritance. He can't lose. A ghostly brogue, a shamrock charm, and a screaming assertion that he is one of two guarantees the winner every time. It is only when he actually meets his utterly irresistible alter ego alive, robust, and angry that his will wavers. But not for long. He proves himself stronger than his faith. He's on his own.

As green as these far-off hills and every bit as beckoning. Absurd not to call this a darlin' book because that's exactly what it is.

BETTER A DINNER OF HERBS, by Byron Herbert Reece. Dutton. $3. The time and the place are not told us. Nor from whence these people came nor whither they will go. A datelessness, a universality, and an age-old struggle endow this parable with strength. A young country girl dies giving birth to her child out of wedlock. Her brother, cherishing her son, swearing vengeance on her seducer, turns away from ancestral acres to find his love and his livelihood in another house. That he also finds his enemy and with brutal intent causes his death simply marks an end to his passion. He must go forth once more, leaving all he holds dear to grief's temporary darkness. The business of living, narrowed down to sleeping, waking, plowing the fields, and growing old, will erase the vibrant interlude.

Mr. Reece weaves well. With simplicity, honesty, and an almost Biblical reliance on the repeated image, he balances emotion with desperate event. The result is powerful and often beautiful.

PULASKI PLACE, by Ruth M. Tabrah. Harper. $3. Whether it is easier to accept your roots and live by them or try to pull up and away is the question. Mrs. Tabrah settles for a compromise. Very wisely, too. There's plenty of trouble in the Polish district of Milltown, USA. In regrettable but typical democratic terms the minority is put to it for survival. Imprecations and injustice barricade the way. But some can take the hurdles.

After all, we're all so many sisters and so many brothers under the skin. There are the sloths, the gold diggers, the opportunists; those to whom

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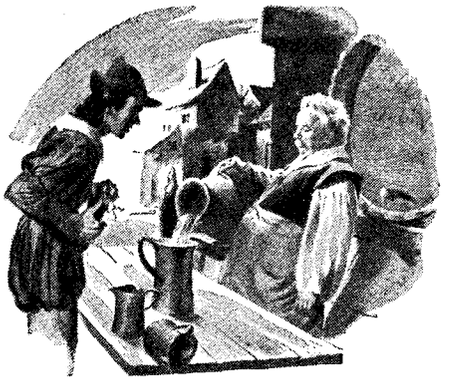

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THE modern broker who engages in large-scale financial operations takes his name from a humble origin. *Broker* appears to be derived from the Old French *broquier* or *brokier*, a dialectal form of *brochier* "one who taps a cask in order to draw the liquor." Thus, the *broker* was in the first place a retail vendor of wine. The first meaning in English was "petty dealer" or "peddler," and from this lowly beginning the word has developed to its present dignity.

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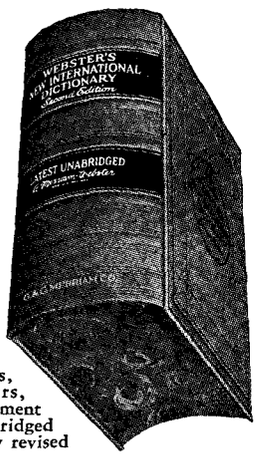

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the easiest way is the only way and those to whom the traditional native way can alone be the best. But, luckily for progress, there is the ambitious one, ready to accept the new, albeit never turning his back on the old.

Told in terms of the Kowalski family and their immediate associates. They'd better be proud to be Americans. No sense to all this otherwise.

—CATHERINE MEREDITH BROWN.

THE PINK HOUSE, by Nelia Gardner White. Viking. $3. This is the story, told in the first person, of the readjustment of a crippled orphan to life with a family of New England relatives, in a pink house, on a back road somewhere in New England. It is a pleasantly insipid deep-dish pie, with such ingredients as a sturdy aunt, who helps the little cripple conquer fate, outgrow her braces and her crutches and develop from an ugly duckling into, of course, a lovely, soulful girl. There is a genial doctor, a mildly eccentric spinster who blushingly marries him, a cold, cruel wife nursing a dark, revengeful secret, a submissive husband supporting her lactation and humbly taking punishment for a misdemeanor many years before the book begins. There are two shallow, selfish sisters, and other familiar subsidiary figures of the Cinderella tale.

For this is Cinderella again, bless her heart, in a pink dress. The house is pink, the readers' spectacles are also tinted, and those in a mood to be lulled by hearing their favorite fairy story retold at greater—how much greater! —length will revel in the story of true love conquering all sorts of ingeniously placed obstacles, and ending in the arms of her chosen prince. For there is a hero, of course, dark and sensitive and manly, to boot.

—EVELYN EATON.

THE SIEGE OF INNOCENCE, by Eugene MacCown. Doubleday. $3. As his creator has drawn him, Bruce Andrews, hero of "The Siege of Innocence," is the dullest young man who ever walked dry-shod through a slough of assorted and fancy sins.

Bruce was an improbably beautiful young American who arrived in Paris with a small legacy, the intention of learning to paint, and a letter to one Eleanor Newhope. A rich middle-aged member of the "international set," Eleanor tried unsuccessfully to seduce him, then saw to it that he met her friends. Bruce saw at first hand "low life in high places" during those years of the 1920's which he spent in Paris and Venice. Armed only with his shining idealism and innocence, he was exposed to all the gilded corruption of a jaded and perverted group of men and women. Unspoiled, unscathed (but just a little troubled, perhaps) he came back from Venice to his simple studio in a humble student's *quartier*, to find happiness after all with the disorganized but fundamentally nice American girl who lived and painted across the hall.

No doubt Mr. MacCown's reporting is accurate enough. He himself worked his way to Paris on a freighter in 1921, played the piano at "Le Boeuf sur le Toit," where he met "everybody," painted and lived in Paris until 1935. But having chosen to write a novel rather than reminiscences about a period, people, and places he knew well, he has failed to remember that the function of the novelist, as Joyce Cary so clearly puts it, is "to make sense of life to the feelings." Beyond the fugitive pleasure of recognizing portraits of figures like Proust and Gide, "The Siege of Innocence" offers little to 1950 readers.

—PAMELA TAYLOR.

UNTIL THE DAY BREAK, by Sallie Lee Bell. Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, Mich. $2.50. Novels "of the time of Christ" are a dime a dozen just now. They all follow more or less the same pattern, with Salome's dance for the head of John the Baptist as a centerpiece. Why that over-sprightly young woman wanted John's head is something every novelist writing of the period tries to explain. Miss Bell attributes it to the wiles of Herodias, wife of Herod Antipas, who saw in John a stumblingblock to putting her husband on the throne of Israel. It's a

FRASER YOUNG'S LITERARY CRYPT: No. 350

A cryptogram is writing in cipher. Every letter is part of a code that remains constant throughout the puzzle. Answer No. 350 will be found in the next issue.

BITMVB QA BPIB EPQKP

QA QV I UIV'A

XWEMZ; OMVQCA QA

BPIB QV EPWAM

XWEMZ I UIV QA.

—RIUMA Z. TWEMTT.

Answer to Literary Crypt No. 349

Blessed is the man who, having nothing to say, abstains from giving in words evidence of the fact.

—GEORGE ELIOT.

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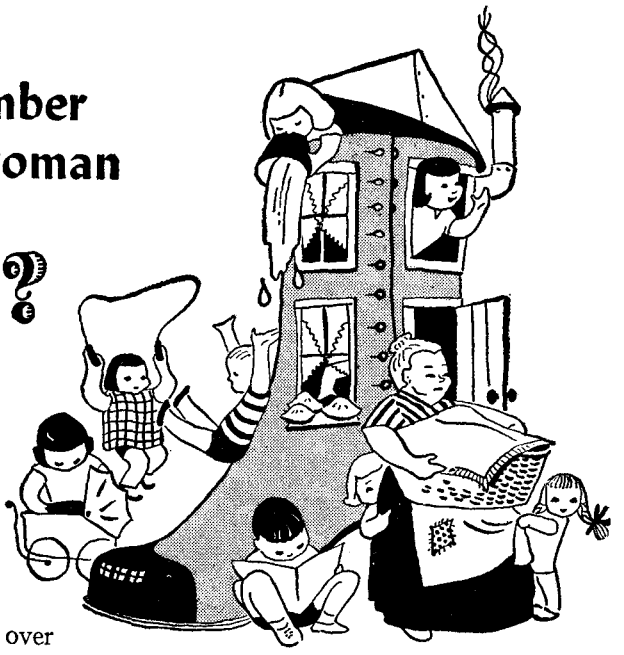
guess, of course, and it's a case of your guess being as good as mine. Oscar Wilde started the fashion, and probably his piece on the subject is as valid as any other to date, besides being better written than most. Certainly, the present author can lay no claim to style or spiritual depth. Though a prize novel with a $2,000 tag—the award was made in Zondervan's International Christian Fiction contest—it is a pedestrian job, full of lush and shrill tones.

It is hard to believe in the two lovers, Mara and David. Mara is a slave and a concubine of Herod Antipas; she awakens the hostility of the jealous Herodias, who plans to put her out of the way. David is a follower of John the Baptist, and he loves Mara at first sight, as she him. David, a simple soul, cannot see that Mara is a prostitute, a fact clear to everyone else, and there is a great to-do when he discovers the truth. Mara eventually becomes the Magdalen of the Gospels, while David goes crazy under the torture inflicted by Herod, only to be healed by Jesus later. "We must do something about this fellow," said Herodias to her husband, meaning Jesus, and what they do to bring Him to Golgotha is the burden of the last part of the story, which as a whole has but little to say to the intelligent reader. —JOHN COURNOS.

IMPERIAL RENEGADE, by Louis de Wohl. Lippincott. $3. It was touch and go between paganism and Christianity during the years following the conversion of the Emperor Constantine. The Mithraists got Julian into their clutches when he was a young man, and after the Apostate fell in battle in A.D. 363 the unfortunate Mithraists felt the vengeance of anything but a pacifist and turn-the-other-cheek Christianity.

It is Julian's story which Louis de Wohl tells in this third of his series of historical romances ("The Living Wood" was published in 1948 and "Throne of the World" last year) dealing with the perilous years when the Roman power was disintegrating. In vivid, almost shilling-shocker manner Julian's love for his cousin Helena, the eunuch's subtle control of the convent lad who was to become an Emperor, and the ultimate brutal murder of the eunuch are told. From first page to last the novel reeks with brutality and evil, with lust and horror. The period is more or less accurately portrayed, though it is doubtful if many persons who were living then were conscious of such lurid venom as prompted a master to beat out his faithful slave's eyes with a thonged whip, or of endless other such incidents with which the book is packed. —J. C.

Remember the old woman who lived in a shoe?



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Personal History. *It is usually a fascinating experience to peep over someone else's shoulder while he works—which explains the appeal of most biographies. The practice of medicine, which holds a particularly powerful attraction for laymen, is the background for Ishbel Ross's "Child of Destiny," the life of Elizabeth Blackwell, America's first woman physician. ("Bowery to Bellevue," the autobiography of another pioneering woman medic, Dr. Emily D. Barringer, is to be published shortly.) A rural schoolteacher, the novelist Jesse Stuart, has given something of the story of all schoolteachers in "The Thread That Runs So True." Alexander MacDonald, an American journalist who practised his craft under dangerous and exotic conditions, tells about it in "Bangkok Editor." John C. Calhoun, whose career is being detailed in a three-volume biography by Charles M. Wiltse, is the subject of a briefer life by Margaret L. Coit.*

America's First Woman Doctor

CHILD OF DESTINY. By Ishbel Ross. New York: Harper & Bros. 309 *pp.* $3.50.

By Helen Clapesattle

PERHAPS it ought not to be discouraging that woman physicians still feel themselves something less than welcomed by the medical fraternity and the public. Elizabeth Blackwell, America's first woman doctor, was graduated from Geneva Medical College in New York State just 101 years ago, in January 1849. She had been refused admission at twenty-nine medical schools before Geneva accepted her—accepted her because the faculty, unwilling to offend the eminent Philadelphia doctor who had dared to recommend her, passed the onus of rejecting her on to the student body, and that rowdy group, thinking it would be a new source of excitement to have a woman in their midst, voted to admit her.

At that time a "female physician" was understood to be either a midwife or, much less reputably, an abortionist. So in spite of her medical degree, Elizabeth Blackwell was unable to secure a post in any hospital in the United States, England, or France. To obtain practical experience she was forced at last to enter La Maternité, the great lying-in hospital of Paris—but as a lowly aide presumably in training for midwifery. And when she returned to America to begin practising in New York City no one wanted to rent her a room for an office. A "doctress" with an office of her own could be nothing but a "bad" woman.

Waiting for the patients who did not come, Dr. Blackwell spent her time preparing lectures on the physical emancipation and sexual education of women. Her ideas on these matters were revolutionary and when the lectures were published in book form in 1852 their frank statement of social truths created a stir in New York. Commenting on them fifty years later, Dr. Abraham Jacobi remarked that Elizabeth Blackwell was "so far in advance of her day that it has taken fifty years for us to bring even the head of the line up to her standard."

When her sister Emily, following Elizabeth's rough road into medicine, graduated from Western Reserve Medical School and came to join her in practice, the Blackwell sisters, with the support of the Quakers and a few "radicals" like Horace Greeley, opened their own hospital, the New York Infirmary for Women and Children. For more than ten years thereafter they tried to induce some established medical school to train woman doctors for the Infirmary staff. Failing in this, they finally took the step in 1868 of opening the Women's College of the New York Infirmary—with standards of training far in advance of those in most medical schools for men.

When Infirmary and College were

both running smoothly Elizabeth Blackwell felt her pioneer work in America was done. Leaving Dr. Emily in charge, she transferred her activities to England, where for some thirty years she lectured, wrote, and held court to foster the progress of women in medicine and to further all measures for the improvement of personal and sexual hygiene for women. She died in England in 1910 at the age of eighty-nine.

Miss Ross was perhaps right to fill in around this personal story many more details about the social and intellectual ferment of the time than about the state of medical practice and medical education. For, in spite of her high standards for women physicians, Elizabeth Blackwell was more a social reformer than a doctor. She had no real flair for the practice of medicine; it was the moral cause, the crusade for principles, that engaged her best energies and abilities.

The men of that day coined a name for the woman who left her home to labor in public for the advancement of her sex; she was called, with disapproval and derogation, a "Strong-minded Woman." Strong-minded Elizabeth Blackwell certainly was, but only by training, one suspects.

She had an unusual capacity for gaiety and fun, yet through much of her life she practised an incredibly Spartan self-discipline. As an adolescent, stricken with chills and fever, she shut herself up in a dark closet, determined to conquer the infection by sheer "decision of character." Attracted so strongly to men that her youth was a series of frenzied romances, she actually decided to take up the study of medicine in the hope that it would prove a barrier to such tormenting weakness. Prudishly repelled by the physical side of medical study, she nonetheless fought fiercely at Geneva for her right to attend all classes and all anatomical demonstrations along with the male students. They never guessed that all the while she was trying to starve herself into pallor lest a tell-tale blush reveal the embarrassment she felt. Loving pretty clothes, she forced herself in classroom and office to wear drab Quaker garb or a shapeless "doctorial sack." Longing for the relaxation of social intercourse, she endured long years of loneliness and ostracism.

The unfolding of such conflicts and contradictions makes "Child of Destiny" a suggestive character study. One wonders whether it is a study only of Elizabeth Blackwell or in some measure of most "strong-minded women."

Helen Clapesattle is author of "The Doctors Mayo."

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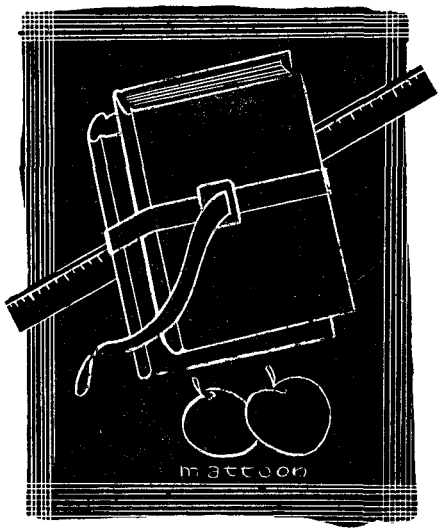
Kentucky Hickory Stick

THE THREAD THAT RUNS SO TRUE. By Jesse Stuart. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 293 pp. $3.

By HOUSTON PETERSON



IT IS good to call attention to a thrilling new book on the teaching profession. In spite of all our talk at all levels about curricula, methods, and ingenious aids, the fact remains that the teacher is the key to the drama, and the need for fine teaching is greater than ever. At a time when the word "power" seems to be the touchstone of every discussion, we may well speak of the power, of the inestimable power, of the teacher.

Henry Adams's remarks cannot be quoted too often: "A parent gives life, but as parent, gives no more. A murderer takes life, but his deed stops there. A teacher affects eternity; he can never tell where his influence stops."

Well, "The Thread That Runs So True" is Jesse Stuart's account of his several years as a school teacher, county-school superintendent, and high-school principal in the Kentucky mountains, not so long ago. It is no doubt an idealized, a romanticized, a melodramatized account. It might have been better if (as someone has suggested) Mr. Stuart had "occasionally scaled himself down to no more than twice life size." But I am not so sure. After all, Jesse Stuart weighed some 220 pounds even in his late teens and he was up against rather rough-and-ready, suspicious people, who often saw things in black and white—and did not know that their vision was melodramatic. "Feudin' and fightin'" was not merely a song in that country.

Courage, sheer physical courage, is usually the last virtue associated with the teaching profession but it is an asset even in many large city schools today. Why should it not be the primary asset of a mountain schoolteacher in the turbulent 1920's or any other time? The genial William Lyon Phelps was certainly not thinking of Kentucky when he said: "Those who have never taught have no idea of the loneliness and responsibility of a schoolteacher shut up in a big schoolroom with a pack of wild boys and girls."

The eight grades in the one primitive room at Lonesome Valley; the fourteen pupils composing the entire student body of Winston High School; the larger problems at Landsburg High School, where the principal's salary could not be raised to $1,500 a year; the entrenched school boards of the various counties; hope continually clashing with economic desperation—all these themes come together in Jesse Stuart's rough rhapsody on education.

If he has ever felt remorse for deserting the classroom for the pen or the typewriter, he can now feel that he has splendidly atoned for his crime.

Houston Peterson, professor of philosophy at Rutgers University, edited the volume "Great Teachers."

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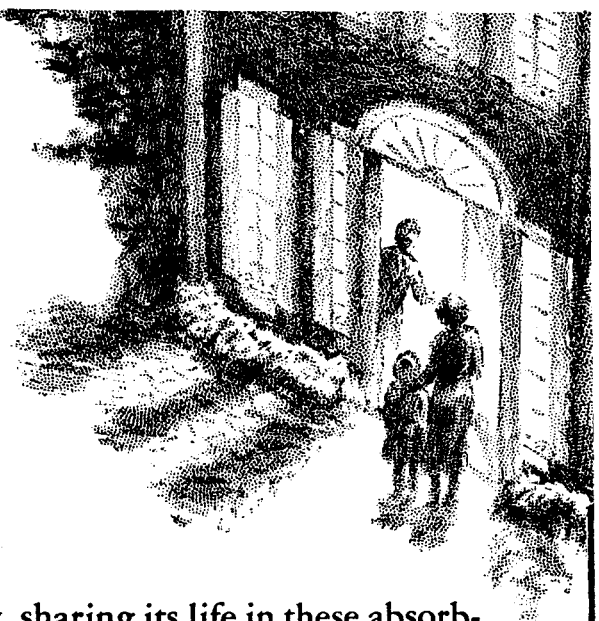

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Secretary of War from S. C.

JOHN C. CALHOUN: American Portrait. By Margaret L. Coit. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co. 593 pp. $5.

By JOHN A. KROUT

THIS is a strange biography, at times highly irritating, but more often delightfully entertaining. The second half is so much better organized and so much more cogently argued than the first that the reader is bothered by the illusion of another author. Calhoun's youth and early career, as here presented, come dangerously close to romantic fiction. The story is fashioned of such flimsy stuff that it almost tears apart in the telling.

Wherever the evidence is meager—and it is meager for most of the years before Calhoun was elected to Congress—the author relies on "what probably happened" or "what undoubtedly could have happened." In one instance, at least, she admits that "Calhoun's actual remarks have been lost," and then proceeds to give the gist of his discourse out of her own fancy. Such devices make easy and pleasant reading but they belong only in a fictionized version.

Although Calhoun and his associates among the "War Hawks," between 1811 and 1815, are sketched with a high sense of drama, their real objectives are not clearly stated. Furthermore, the significance of the postwar "economic nationalists," in some ways the heirs to the War Hawks, is almost completely ignored. Few readers will get from these pages an understanding of the legislation concerning finance, the tariff, internal improvements, and the military establishment that constituted the program of those Congressmen who were driving hard toward "national self-sufficiency." Without such understanding, Calhoun's contribution remains obscure. Many of his political speeches are juggled chronologically until his thinking and utterances seem to be illogical or inappropriate. But he does receive the credit which he deserves for his arduous and imaginative work while he was Secretary of War.

Miss Coit feels "that every principle of secession or states' rights which Calhoun ever voiced can be traced right back to the thinking of intellectual New England in the early 1800's. Not the South, not slavery, but Yale College and Litchfield Law School made Calhoun a nullifier." She may be right, for talk of states' rights, and even secession, came easily to a New Englander's lips during the very years that the young South Carolinian lived in Connecticut. Yet no evidence is adduced, either from Calhoun's letters or from other sources, to prove that he learned his political theories from Connecticut Yankees. Indeed, his personal correspondence leads one to believe that he had determined to learn as little as possible from them.

For her judicious handling of the thrice-told tale of Peggy Eaton and the rather obvious plotting of Jackson's "Kitchen Cabinet," the author deserves high praise. She is also discreetly cautious, and rightly so, in portraying the respective roles of William H. Crawford and Martin Van Buren in Calhoun's loss of favor with President Jackson. It is difficult, however, to comprehend just how the crude struggle for power in Jackson's administration was "symbolic of the conversion of America from a republic into a democracy," and there must be many who could not agree that "in all American history there is no greater tragedy than the war between Andrew Jackson and John C. Calhoun." Does the author mean that if Jackson and Calhoun had remained friends the nation would have been spared the "ordeal of the Union"?

When she discusses Calhoun's response to the knotty problems of federalism, Miss Coit sets her sights far above the trivia which occasionally blur her vision in the early chapters of the book. Here she seems to be more concerned with the intellectual stature of her subject than with his personal posing. Her probing of the South Carolinian's dilemma over slavery is deft and sure, and her sympathy for him in his difficulties comes from an insight which is all too rare. Equally impressive is her analysis of Calhoun's efforts to solve the riddle of majority rule and minority rights. She may exaggerate his significance as a model for those who are today concerned with the rights of the nonconformist but she makes his relentless logic seem more than a device to win converts to a cause. She gives it the overtones which must have been there in his lifetime, overtones which were heard by his fellow countrymen in the South and made them his passionate followers.

John A. Krout, dean of the graduate faculties of Columbia University, is author of "The Completion of Independence," and other books on American history.

Your Literary I.Q.

By Howard Collins

ACCIDENTS WHA' HOPPENED

Fannie Gross, of Asheville, N. C., asks you to identify the characters briefly described below, each of whom was involved in an accident. Allowing five points for each one you can name, and another five for the story in which he appears, a score of sixty is par, seventy is very good, and eighty or better is excellent. Answers on page 44.

1. Having carefully preserved a bottle of holy water for the baptism of his first grandson, he considered that a major catastrophe had taken place when he stumbled over a hamper, smashed the bottle, and spilled the water on the cellar floor.
2. A young prince, who had been spared having his eyes burned out was killed by the stones on which he landed when he leaped from a wall to escape his royal uncle.
3. Galloping her horse at a furious pace in the blinding sun while watching a fight in the air between a heron and a falcon, this young lady plunged into a chasm and was crippled for life.
4. An overbearing radio favorite threatened to sue for $350,000 because he slipped and fell for the second time in front of his host's house.
5. While leaning over a parapet to watch a passing parade, this young man dislodged a tile which landed on the head of the new Procurator of Judea.
6. An atomic explosion in Mississippi resulted in the sterilization of all the men in the world except this one, who was at the bottom of a lead mine at the time of the disaster.
7. Preparing for a tea party, this young man ruined his last pair of trousers when he sat on his little sister's water-color paint box.
8. Enmeshed in a net of hopelessness, this man and woman attempted to end it all by sledding down a steep hill and crashing into an elm tree, but instead of being killed they were tragically maimed.
9. A poet, wit, and swordsman who had lived dangerously died from a blow on the head by a block of wood that was carelessly dropped from a window he happened to be passing.
10. While riding at the back of a chaise, this girl's shabby cloak was caught in one of the wheels and she wept and wept and wept.

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Siamese Newspaperman

BANGKOK EDITOR. By Alexander MacDonald. New York: The Macmillan Co. 229 pp. $3.

By MARGARET LANDON

WORLD WAR II scattered Americans across the face of the earth as from a giant saltcellar. Some of them chose to stay where the war had deposited them and among these was Alexander MacDonald, ex-newspaperman from Boston.

When the Navy informed him that it had no further use for his services he was comfortably established in a palace in Bangkok. The marble floors, tapestries, crystal chandeliers, and seven bathrooms were in pleasant contrast to the dingy room over a restaurant in Washington, D. C., that had been his last place of residence in the United States. He had found that he liked associating with royalty and ministers of state. More, in a thousand ways, Siam had cast its spell over him. He had eaten of the lotus. He would stay.

To remain in Bangkok MacDonald decided to return to his trade, but not as a reporter. He would become publisher and editor of an English-language newspaper designed to serve the small foreign community and the foreign-educated Siamese.

This was not an enterprise for a timid man. News, per se, was lightly regarded in Bangkok. The sacred what, where, who, why, and when of American journalism were often ignored. Reporters sold their scoops to the highest bidder among the rival papers. Interviews were notable for innuendo rather than information. Blackmail was an accepted practice. Editors sometimes realized more from what they did not print than from their paid circulation and advertising.

In this rough-and-tumble journalism people got hurt. An editor who inveighed against government corruption was riddled with bullets from a sub-machine gun. A second was severely beaten for criticizing the political activities of the army. A third published a racy account of the arrest in Manila for smuggling diamonds of an influential colonel's daughter and was wounded by an assassin. A reporter was beaten to death in the home of a deputy minister of state.

In addition to courage it took persistence and resourcefulness to be a publisher in Bangkok. MacDonald had to organize his company—it included two "ins" and two "outs" in politics — find that rarest of commodities, a press, then wheedle the Southeast Asia Command into releas-

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—CHARLES POORE, *N. Y. Times*

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—JOHN K. HUTCHENS, *N. Y. Herald Tribune*

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—FLORENCE HAXTON BULLOCK, *N. Y. Herald Tribune*

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I, My Ancestor

by NANCY WILSON ROSS

author of ***THE LEFT HAND IS THE DREAMER***

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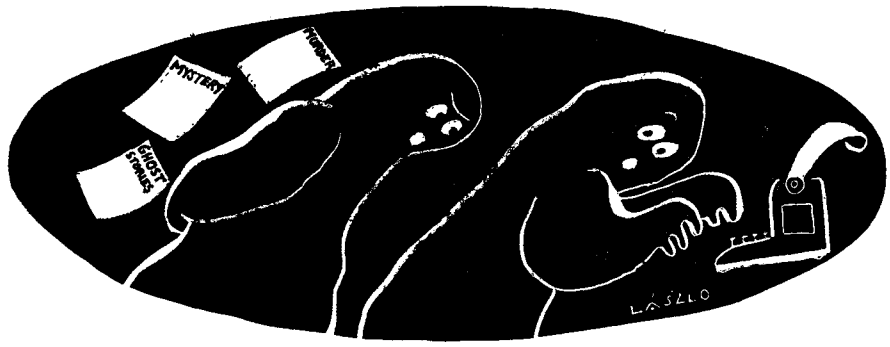
ing to his custody the two Japanese pressmen who alone in Bangkok knew how to repair and operate that press, put together a polyglot staff, and surmount other difficulties too numerous to be mentioned.

Two months before the first issue of the *Bangkok Post* could appear MacDonald scooped the world for AP, which he represented, on the biggest news story of a generation in Siam. Young King Ananda Mahidol had come back to his country after years of study in Switzerland. He was boyish, gentle, intelligent. Everyone seemed to love him. Yet on the quiet Sunday morning of June 9, 1946, he lay on his bed with a bullet through his head.

During the next three years MacDonald saw this tragic death become a political football. The "ins" went out, and the "outs" came in. Corruption in government burgeoned. Through the continued excitement of plots and counterplots, assassinations and attempted assassinations, revolutions and abortive revolutions, the *Bangkok Post* grew in stature and influence.

MacDonald tells the story of his adventures with the easy skill of the professional newspaperman and with a special grace that is his own. Among the Siamese, who value courtesy above the harshness of truth, the quality of kindliness is coin of the realm. It helps to explain how MacDonald and his paper managed to survive in so turbulent a milieu.

Margaret Landon is author of "Anna and the King of Siam" and the recent novel "Never Dies the Dream."



Personal History Notes

LETTERS FROM ALBERT JAY NOCK 1924-1945 TO EDMUND C. EVANS, MRS. EDMUND C. EVANS, AND ELLEN WINSOR. Caxton Printers. Caldwell, Ida. $3. The founder of the *Freeman* outlived the founder of the New Deal and exulted. In the last letter in this collection, here dated April 2, 1945 (the error is eerily unfortunate), he wrote his "dear friends": "We really ought to do some celebrating because Franklin's demise is the biggest public improvement that America has experienced since the passage of the Bill of Rights." On August 31, 1943 (a tolerably anxious moment, with the invasion of Italy about to be undertaken, and the toughest Pacific fighting yet to come) Mr. Nock had included, among American newspapers which were "printing rank sedition," the hardly leftish *Providence Journal*—it is, in fact, the only newspaper he specifies. One may soundly conclude that publication of these letters is of value not for their historical or literary content, but rather for their registration of the emotional boiling point of one of our ruggeder individualists. Nor can there be any doubt that Mr. Nock wrote with half an eye on his immediate correspondents and both ears cocked to posterity. His prose style is implicit with the attitudinizing of one who is not so much writing letters as correcting proof.

BOSTON MAHATMA, by Leslie G. Ainley. Bruce Humphries, Boston. $3. This is a straightaway biography of Martin M. Lomasney, long boss of Boston's Ward Eight. A drink was named for Ward Eight (although Lomasney himself was a lifelong teetotaler); so was a novel by Joseph T. Dinneen, recent biographer of Jim Curley. Lincoln Steffens said of Lomasney that "he had strength, rough kindness, tribal loyalty, and, rarest of all, intellectual integrity." He was also a practical politician of surpassing endowments. Mr. Ainley's highly factual account of Lomasney's career gives a detailed picture of the boss in action, and its textbook value to intending aspirants to community political leadership is therefore considerable. Some of the minutiae are too strongly localized for the general reader, however, who will be further confused by the lack of an index. The title is not a whim of Mr. Ainley's—it was a *Boston Post* cartoonist who affixed the "Mahatma" to Lomasney, and Lomasney liked it.

EMILY, DUCHESS OF LEINSTER, 1731-1814: A Study of Her Life and Times, by Brion FitzGerald. Staples Press, New York. $2.75. Lady Emilia Mary Lennox, daughter of Charles, Duke of Richmond, was born four months before George Washington; when she died Napoleon was safely tucked away on Elba. When she was fifteen she married the Earl of Kildare, later created Duke of Leinster. By him she had seven sons and five daughters—one of the sons was wounded in the American Revolution and another died with a price on his head during the Irish insurrection of 1798. The Duke of Leinster himself had died in 1773 and a year later his widow married "the lanky, scowling Mr. Ogilvie," tutor of her children. The

The Criminal Record

The Saturday Review's Guide to Detective Fiction

Title of Author	*Crime, Place, and Sleuth*	*Summing Up*	*Verdict*
FRIGHT *George Hopley* (Rinehart: $2.50)	Frantic bridegroom's throttling of blackmailing girl and his efforts to cover traces lead to further fear-inspired violence.	Cumulative effects of fear on mind of decent chap make moving and tautly dramatic tale—with gasp-inducing last chapter.	Somber shocker
THE KNIFE BEHIND YOU *James Benét* (Harper: $2.50)	California lawyer imperils career—and life—to save shrewdly "framed" suspect in dept.-store detective's murder—and nets some bigger fish.	Mercantile background, politics, and connivery convincingly presented. Story moves through some rather slow spots to surprising knockout solution.	Good
AND WHEN SHE WAS BAD SHE WAS MURDERED *Robert Starnes* (Lippincott: $2.50)	His discovery of lush art model's body in grim Alexandria mansion sends finder post haste to amazing Dr. St. George Peachy.	Dr. Peachy is worthy addition to fantastic amateurs of fiction. Tale is pungent, amusing, and well filled with excitement.	Good job

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marriage caused a sensation; William Ogilvie, a Scotsman transplanted to Dublin, had begun life as a school usher at twelve pounds a year and had quit his job because the authorities would not turn his pounds into guineas. But the marriage turned out very well; Mr. Ogilvie entered the Irish Parliament and made a speech that lasted an hour and a quarter. Not the least interesting of the details concerning the engaging Lady Emily which Mr. FitzGerald has dug up are his references, when he could find them, to the books she knew. She read Fielding, Smollett, and Fanny Burney on publication—"Tom Jones," read aloud by Lord Powerscourt, "diverts the boys," but Mr. Ogilvie did not care for "Humphry Clinker"; he said: "I dislike Smellfungus and all his writing." The book is an urbane and entertaining resurrection piece.

THE RECOLLECTIONS OF ALEXIS DE TOCQUEVILLE, translated by Alexander Teixeira de Mattos, edited by J. P. Mayer. Columbia University Press. $5. This book, covering the years 1848 and 1849, has had an interesting history. The text was originally published in France in 1893, more than forty years after it was written. De Mattos's English translation appeared in 1896. In 1942, of all years, a new French edition, with additions, was issued. Its editor failed to identify the new material, and Mr. Mayer assumed the task of comparing the editions. He has designated the 1942 additions with brackets and just as the reader of a letter takes particular pains to decipher any material that has been lined through, so will the student of the present text devote special attention to the bracketed passages. But that same student, according to Mr. Mayer, would first "do well . . . to familiarize himself with a reliable history of the French Revolution of 1848," and he appends a reading list. Mr. Mayer's brief but illuminating introduction concludes, however, with a significant statement that brings the "Recollections" sharply into contemporary focus: "What in 1849 were party trends in France are today national policies of Soviet Russia, USA, and Great Britain. The final outcome of a perhaps possible constructive conciliation of these trends is still in the balance; may it draw strength from the wealth of the French political mind, which has always been the laboratory of the Revolution whose course *still* continues."

—JOHN T. WINTERICH.

OUT IN THE MID-DAY SUN, by Monica Martin. Little, Brown. $3. When she was twenty Monica Martin set out from England for India. With her were her nine-month-old daughter, Rene, and her twenty-five-year-old husband, Peter. Peter had been born in India and now a job awaited him with a mica mine in a remote Northern province. In England he had never found employment to his liking but, as events were to show, he had chosen an ideal wife.

Mrs. Martin fitted without difficulty into that long tradition of Englishwomen who have accepted an incredibly lonely and rigorous life, sent their children off to boarding schools in more healthful climates, earned the puzzled but sincere respect of the native-born Indians, and extracted what pleasure there was to be had from a life in which the luxury of plenty of servants was more than counterbalanced by incredible conditions of food, hygiene, medical care, and, most important of all, lack of companionship and even the simplest amusements.

"Out in the Mid-day Sun" is delightful, vivid, and disarming. If Mrs. Martin does not dramatize her life or her material, the unaccented tenor of her account reflects the more perfectly the equanimity with which she seems to have met the agreeable and difficult. She can tell an amusing anecdote about her own mistakes without being distressingly arch. And she is practically unique among feminine big-game hunters in her endearing ability to recount her jungle exploits and hazards without the smallest hint of boasting.

Not for a minute does Monica Martin give in to the common temptation to make a good story just a little bit better in the telling. With unusual reticence she keeps the personalities of the Martins as shadowy as possible, drawing a fascinating and accurate picture of their lives meantime.

—PAMELA TAYLOR.

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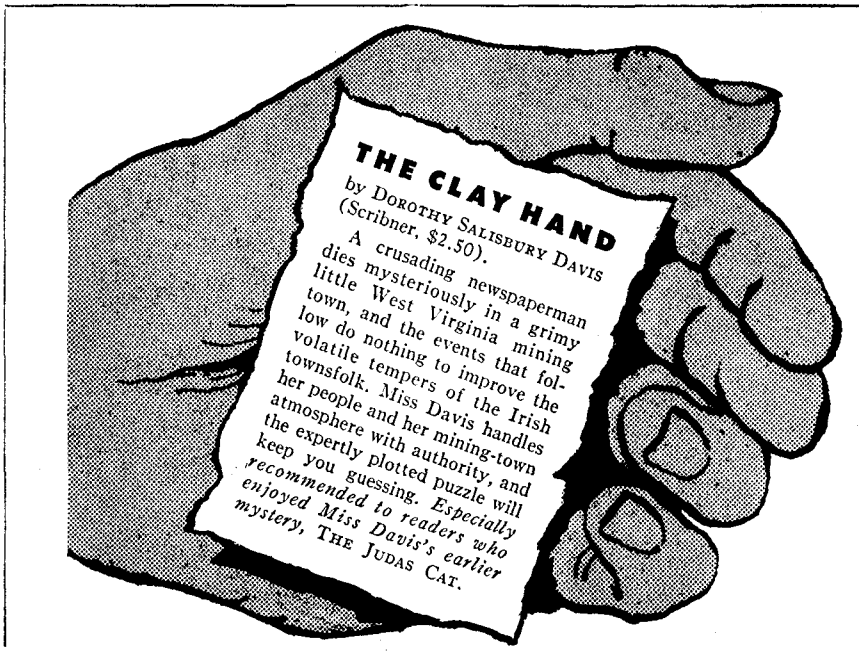
THE CLAY HAND
by DOROTHY SALISBURY DAVIS
(Scribner, $2.50).
A crusading newspaperman dies mysteriously in a grimy little West Virginia mining town, and the events that follow do nothing to improve the volatile tempers of the Irish townsfolk. Miss Davis handles her people and her mining-town atmosphere with authority, and the expertly plotted puzzle will keep you guessing. Especially recommended to readers who enjoyed Miss Davis's earlier mystery, THE JUDAS CAT.

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Music to My Ears

NO RUSSE LIKE AN OLD RUSSE

"TIS TRUE life in Russia is far from gay," sings the baritone. "Our good relations with the states of Europe encouraged hopes of lasting peace for Russia," declaims the tenor. "Ah, now we see the traces of those years of foreign schooling!" accuses the bass. Is this, then, a satire or commentary on the present state of affairs in the USSR? Hardly. They are excerpts from the text of Modeste Moussorgsky's "Khovanchina," written seventy-five years ago and just having its first performances at the Metropolitan. Incidentally, it is about incidents in the year 1682.

Whether retiring director Edward Johnson conceived this last novelty of his fifteen years at the Metropolitan as a political commentary as well as an artistic service, he alone can tell—and he isn't telling. The beards are long and the costumes are antiquated but the central theme is as topical as the latest news bulletin from Moscow—mistrust of Western influence in the life of Russia, pride in the times. Prince Galitsin tells us, "I led our war-torn troops against the Poles and broke the pride of their insolent nobles."

Art, when great, is justly considered timeless, but it has no right to be as timely as this save to remind us there are some things so fundamental in the life of the world that a few centuries change not their underlying doubts and conflicts but merely the shape in which they recur in one epoch or another. We may as well recognize that security for "Mother Russia" was as much a problem to Peter's Russia as it is to Stalin's and try to fathom the forces at work. There may not be as much time in the future for leisurely thought as there has been since 1682.

In this patchwork of song and dance, chorus and solo—and, for that matter, Moussorgsky and Rimsky-Korsakoff, for the composer had not finished the score when he died in 1881, and we know it only as "refined" by his colleague—we are in a period when Westernism had the upper hand and the "rebels" were those who wanted to return to "old faiths and customs." Unfortunately for clarity of plot, Peter never appears on the stage (being a Romanoff, he could not be physically represented in a play during Moussorgsky's life)—and it takes mighty much mulling of the separate incidents to assemble the philosophic pattern I have mentioned.

Khovansky (played powerfully, if with little subtlety, by Lawrence Tibbett) represents the political rejection of outside influence; Dosifei (splendidly sung by Jerome Hines), the religious force urging return to ancient beliefs as the means of salvation. Always and ever in the middle is the huge mass of Russian people (Moussorgsky called this "a people's music drama"), for whom somebody purports to be doing something—without those concerned knowing much what is being done or how. In the Moussorgskyian connotation it was a reaction against one kind of authoritarianism (the Czars and princes vs. the people). In our framework, it is still authoritarianism (the Stalin dictatorship vs. the people) with the central theme, as ever, peace, security, fear of the Germans (as exemplifying the West).

So much for parable. What of polyphony? "Khovanchina" is no more an opera in the common sense than "Of Time and the River" is a novel in the common sense. Yet the aspects of genius which were Moussorgsky's as well as Wolfe's are all over it. The strange mingling of folk-sounding modal music and sweeping outbursts in a rather Verdian, Italianate manner are not nearly so strange or so jarring as they may seem to the uninitiated. Through the Moussorgsky correspondence of the "Khovanchina" period runs a constant thread of reference to musical ideas "very European" to represent the elements of the story which *are* European-influenced, with others "Old Russia" in sound and context. To descend from the general to the particular, Moussorgsky was himself a key figure in the struggle against Western influence in the music of Russia. He was by nature (and lack of formal training) opposed to those disciplines and procedures which found their typical expression in Tchaikovsky, considered by his contemporaries the most Westernized of Russian composers.

In this rigorous, rather untheatrical design, interest goes only with dramatic truth—which is not the easy way of effectiveness. The superb prelude painting dawn over the Red Square is known to symphonic audiences and record listeners (a Koussevitzky disc is still current) as are the engaging "Persian Dances" of act four. Even here is a kind of parable, turning the Russian face to the East—for, as Moussorgsky says in one of his letters: "The sun never rises in the West." The musical interest accumulates, rather than develops, with a richly interesting third act, when the impelling factor of most Russian opera—the chorus—finally becomes dominant in both the musical and dramatic scheme. Oddly, the impressive entr'acte of act IV (which Stokowski once recorded) is omitted in the version now given.

The Metropolitan production cost a small fortune (small as fortunes are reckoned these days) and, unfortunately, didn't show it, since the milieu of 1682 had ugliness inherent in it. But while this layout is certainly ugly, it manages to be impressive amidst the calculated squalor and barren luxuries. Ten more rehearsals and a few changes of cast would certainly have improved it, but such singers (and actors) as Robert Weede (Shaklovity), Charles Kullman (Prince Golovitsin), and Brian Sullivan (as Khovansky's son), made much of their opportunities.

Whether the whole enterprise gained by being presented in English is very much an issue. I can't believe that anybody who didn't do considerable homework could have followed the story from the occasionally intelligible words that reached the ear, and the fault was not only enunciation. English syllables, when tortured into the framework of music written for Russian ones no longer sound like the vernacular to us. "Bring water—drinking water" may be the translation of what the Russian text says, but we would certainly say to a servant: "May we have some water?"

Mention of the ladies—Anne Bollinger, Polyna Stoska, and Risë Stevens—has been deferred because none of them was very good and they are, by and large, out of the main stream of the action, used as devices for changing vocal color and mood rather than as integral parts of the story. Miss Stevens, who has some of the most beautiful music in the score to sing, did it intelligently and with as much clarity as her good talents permitted in this exceptional part of Marthe.

Well, "Khovanchina" is here, for which thanks are due to Edward Johnson certainly and to Emil Cooper, who conducted. Whether it stays longer than the few repetitions possible in the remaining weeks of this season depends not on Moussorgsky, not on the public, but on the repertory ideas of Rudolf Bing. He might bear in mind another remark of Moussorgsky: "The artist believes in the future because he lives in it."

—IRVING KOLODIN.

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ACADEMICIAN EXTRAORDINARY

(*Continued from page 23*)

tion was in its hazardous infancy, no wonder Mr. Churchill named the book as he did. Storms have been incessant in the climate of his life. If sometimes he has provoked them, at most times he has dominated them. Thunder and lightning have never frightened him. He can himself release lightning bolts and answer thunder with a thunder of his own.

Had it not been for the storms of both war and politics, Mr. Churchill might never have lifted a paint brush. If I use this expression instead of saying he might never have turned painter, it is because, as a writer and orator, Mr. Churchill has long been one of the most masterful of painters. He has executed his finest brush strokes with his pen. Great events have sat for him as his favorite model. Language has served him as his palette. His writing may at times be marred by oratory; his prose may be aimed at the ear instead of the eye. His cadences for their fullest effect may need the orchestration of his voice and his sibilants. Even so, his narratives are stirringly visual. They are hung with pictures. With words Mr. Churchill has proved himself a supreme colorist, fond of vermilion, khaki, and navy blue, though occasionally surrendering to purple. He is as boldly skilful at seascapes and battle scenes as he is at portraiture and exposition. Indeed the canvases by which he will always live and by which all of us have been moved are to be found in his books, not in galleries.

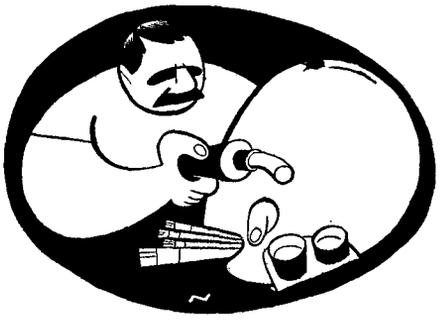
HE was forty when first he turned to painting with paints. His fortunes were not at their happiest. Reverses at Gallipoli had brought about his departure from the Admiralty at the end of May 1915. He remained a member of the Cabinet and of the War Council. He was left in a position where he "knew everything and could do nothing." His unbearable inactivity after his immense and exciting activities left him gasping. As he put it, he was like a sea-beast fished up from the depths, or a diver too suddenly hoisted, and his veins threatened to burst from the fall in pressure.

His first attempt was made one Sunday in the country with his children's paintbox. He liked the experiment so well that the next morning he bought a complete outfit for painting in oils. The next step was to *begin*. But how? Where? And with what color? His hand "seemed arrested by a silent veto." For once in his life Mr. Churchill was timid. With a tiny brush and with tremendous caution he at last made, in the area where he knew the sky ought to be, a blue mark "about as big as a bean." Then he stopped. His career as a painter might have stopped, too, had not Sir John Lavery's wife arrived at that moment, asked for a big brush, and with large, fierce strokes proved to him that the canvas could not hit back. If Mr. Churchill has never felt any "awe" of canvases since, he has found infinite pleasure in attacking them.

That delight, the delight of carrying in your pocket a key to "a wonderful new world of thought and craft, a sunlit garden gleaming with light and color," he communicates in every wise and witty line of "Painting as a Pastime." Mr. Churchill's is a remarkable essay. It is personal, warm, and perceptive. It is basted in the rich juices of experience; written with unashamed enthusiasm; written from the heart, yet written with a smile. To find its match in felicity and charm, one must turn back to Hazlitt's "On the Pleasure of Painting."

No two men could be less alike than William Hazlitt and Winston Churchill. A gulf divides their minds and temperaments and endowments. Yet in two of their passionate absorptions —the English language and painting— they are blood brothers. Although Hazlitt turned to writing after having attempted to be a painter and Mr. Churchill did not paint until after his fame in both public affairs and literature had been securely established, both men express sentiments almost interchangeable on the joys of painting.

"From the moment you take up the pencil, and look Nature in the face, you are at peace with your own heart. . . . The mind is calm, and full at the same time. The hand and eye are equally employed. . . . The hours pass away untold, without chagrin, and without weariness; nor would you ever wish to pass them otherwise." That is Hazlitt, but it could be Mr. Churchill,



because it is he who says, "Go out into the sunlight and be happy with what you see. Painting is a complete distraction. I know of nothing which, without exhausting the body, more entirely absorbs the mind. Whatever the worries of the hour or the threats of the future, once the picture has begun to flow along, there is no room for them in the mental screen. . . . Time stands respectfully aside, and it is only after many hesitations that luncheon knocks gruffly at the door."

There are differences, however. Where Hazlitt, whose life was tempest-tossed, writes about painting as a sedentary man, Mr. Churchill writes about it with equal skill as a man who has seen and relished combat in the field. Only he, with his fondness for military metaphor, would seize upon such a Churchillian word as "audacity" as a painter's first requirement. Only he would liken a painter to a commander-in-chief and a canvas to a battleground. Only he would compare "proportion" and "relation" in painting to the reserves upon which a general must depend, or insist that, if a canvas is not to represent a defeat, it in the manner of a victory must be the result of a good plan.

Although, in passing, Mr. Churchill pays delightful tribute to books, libraries, a change of interest as a means to rest, the heightened powers of observation brought about by surveying any object with a painter's eye, and to such impressionists as Manet, Monet, Cézanne, and Matisse, perhaps the most exciting aspect of his essay is the reverent affection which he, the man of action, feels for art and the artist. He condescends to neither; he has only admiration for both. A great painting is to him "an intellectual manifestation the equal in quality and intensity of the finest achievements of warlike action, of forensic argument, or of scientific or philosophical adjudication."

The world by some, in moments of over-simplification, is held to be divided into Greeks and Romans. The first are supposed to symbolize the lovers and creators of beauty; the second, the givers of laws and the doers of deeds. But it is one of the distinctions of British history that it abounds in fusions of the two temperaments which prove the fallacy of such an easy division.

When, on the night before he was to face Montcalm on the Plains of Abraham, General Wolfe said he would prefer being the author of Gray's "Elegy" to the glory of beating the French on the morrow, he demonstrated that double endowment Englishmen can possess for being, so to speak, both Greek and Roman. Sir Philip Sidney, as a warrior-statesman who

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had written "Astrophel and Stella," "An Apology for Poetry," and "Arcadia," had proved this long ago. So had the Viscount of St. Albans, that Lord Chancellor better remembered as Francis Bacon. Indeed, from the distant days when a king named Alfred translated Gregory the Great and St. Augustine, and a hard-working man, variously employed as a soldier, a commercial agent, an M.P., a Clerk of the King's Works, and a Deputy Forester for the Crown, found time to write "The Canterbury Tales," the tradition had persisted. Macaulay, Disraeli, and Bulwer-Lytton were among its torchbearers. Fortunately it has not perished. The Lord Tweedsmuir who was John Buchan continued it. So has General Wavell, who in the midst of the last war compiled an anthology of poetry known as "Other Men's Flowers."

The list, though far longer than hinted here, has never possessed a more spectacular entry than Winston Churchill. From his days in India on his energies and curiosities have been superhuman. Even in his thirties when Mr. Churchill was new to the Cabinet, Sir Edward Grey was complaining, "Winston, very soon, will become incapable from sheer activity of mind of being anything in a Cabinet but Prime Minister." Most people never really live the one life at their disposal. Mr. Churchill would have found one life grossly insufficient, had he not discovered a simple solution to the problem. He has lived many lives, and lived all of them to the full.

"What do you do?" was a question asked occasionally of Annapolis graduates by officers of the Royal Navy during the last war. By this they did not mean "What is your specific assignment?" They took that for granted. They meant "What do you do in addition to your job? What is your outside interest, hobby, or diversion?"

Mr. Churchill has held almost every important position in His Majesty's Government. But, hard-pressed by arduous duties though he has been, he has a gusto of mind, spirit, and body which has demanded releases beyond his official tasks. He has written more books, and certainly more important books, than most authors whose whole careers are devoted to book-writing. Even getting these done has not robbed him of leisure and the need of filling his free hours. Hence his paint-

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ing and the joy he has found in it.

To live, most men fortunately must work. How civilized they are is better measured by how they employ their leisure than by what is the employment which has earned it for them. Mr. Churchill's is a mind which cannot tolerate inactivity. He rests it by recharging it. Instead of emptying it of all thought, he refreshes it by a change of interest. He is as impatient with the idle rich as he is with the idle poor. He divides rational, industrious, and useful human beings into two classes—those whose work is work and whose pleasure is pleasure and those whose work and pleasure are one. The life of those belonging to the second category is, as he sees it, "a natural harmony. For them the working hours are never long enough. Each day is a holiday . . ." No wonder Mr. Churchill describes such persons as "Fortune's favored children." Win or lose, he is one of these himself.

—JOHN MASON BROWN.

My Gentlest Song

(Pine and rose)

By Peter Viereck

1.

SMALL FRIEND, you fed my awe when I was small,
I who have never fed on soil alone.
Because I must be lit by more than sun,
I bless the bloom of which you'll now be shorn,
Sweetness no cone of mine can ever grow.
Your nectar wounds me wilder than your thorn;
I've loved you fresher than my youngest bud
And longer than your oldest can recall;—
Yet must not help you, even if I could,
For it's not I who made you mortal. Mourn
That we—once planted by the selfsame strewing,
Pale seed by seed together flying,
You not yet rose, I not yet pine, upborne
By the same gusty randomness—must blow
Apart forever by the law of snow.

2.

Remember, friend, your dancing-days of May
When restless willows rustled just for you?
You tossed your petals such a reckless way
You hardly noticed me the whole month through
And thought your beauty was its own defense.
Yet all the while my boughs were shielding you.
You know the zephyrs, I the hurricanes;
I've suffered hail so you could sip the dew.
Because I've died so many times each fall,
Now something in me can not die at all.
But each new ring of wisdom cost me dear
In chills you'll never feel who last a year.
Now go—goodbye—while I grow still more tall;
You bore me when you look so glum;
For there's one Shade I must not shade you from.

3.

Small friend, you'll never leave me any more
Though you have death and I have sleep ahead.
My beautiful hunger waits for you, it waits
To twine us even closer than before—
(Before we sprouted toward such different fates)—
Close as the hour we lay there, spore by spore,
Two seeming twins in selfsame garden-bed.
How many times I've wished me dead instead!
How gladly I'd divide my unspent sheen
And lend your fadings half my evergreen!
But must not help you, even if I could,
For it's not I who made you less than wood.
You—bright brief putrefying weed—
Will feed my roots next spring, will feed
The fabulous white-hot darkness at my core.

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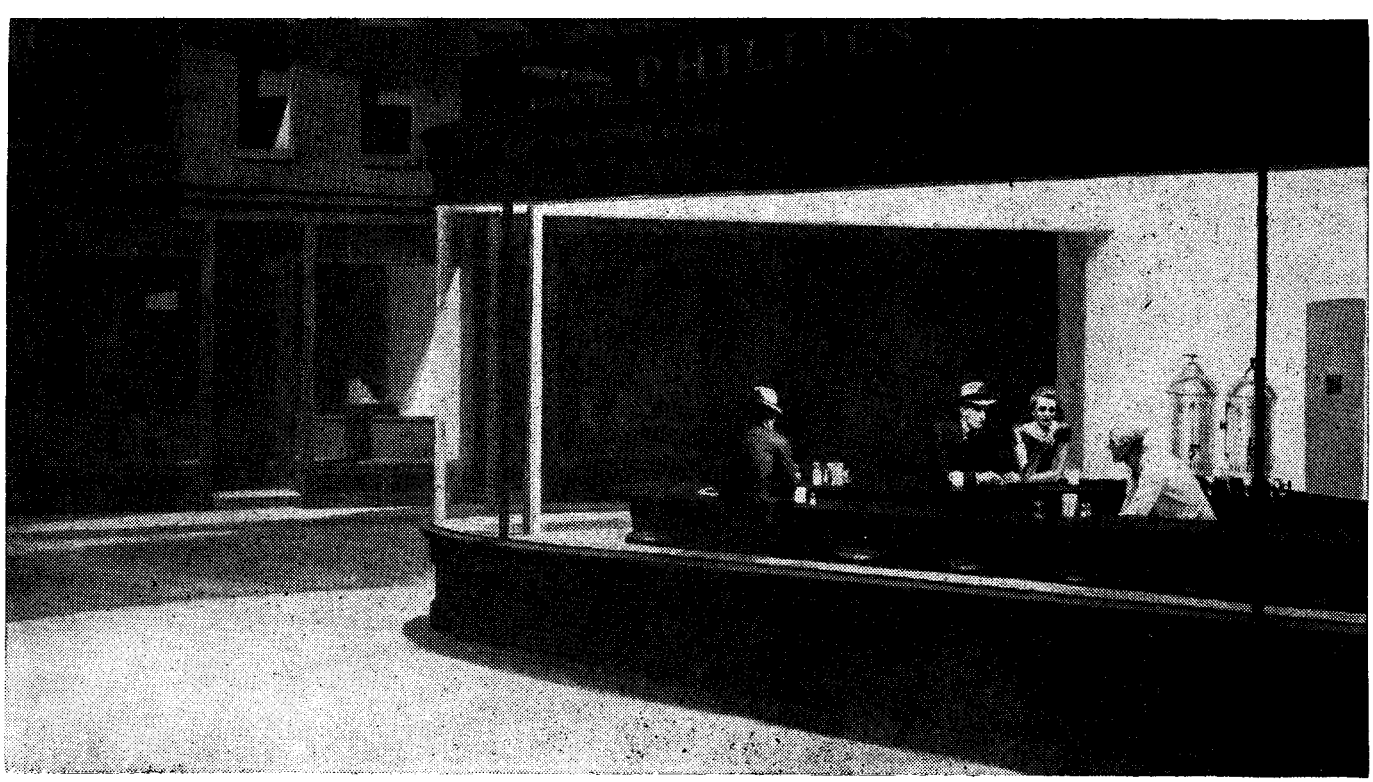
THE FINE ARTS

ARRESTED TIME BY EDWARD HOPPER

THE Whitney Museum of American Art in New York is now holding a large retrospective exhibition of the works of Edward Hopper, later to be shown at the Boston Museum of Fine Arts and the Detroit Institute of Arts. In the opinion of a number of our critics, Hopper is one of the finest and most individual artists America has produced lately. To many of abstract art's formalist devotees, on the other hand, his painting is a negation of everything for which the modern movements have stood. Hopper is a realist and an illustrator, they will tell you, and as such belongs to a tradition which the progressive currents of our era have made permanently obsolete. Well, the controversy between the two schools of thought about Hopper has been going on for a long time. By now nearly everyone's critical chips are down one way or the other, and in a sense the Whitney show declares a firm "*rien ne va plus*." The stake is the degree of the future's interest in this artist. My own bet is on Hopper, across the board.

Hopper *is* a realist and an illustrator, of course. But what the Whitney exhibition makes clear, as never before, is the eloquence of his realism and the profundity of his illustrative means. His greatest achievement, it seems to me, has been to create an extremely personal and memorable interpretation of New York City and its environs. It is no easy matter to suggest the fiber of a great city without descending to topographical anonymity of style, and not many living painters have done it anywhere near so successfully as the eighteenth-century Venetians. One thinks at once of moderns like Sickert, Utrillo, Kokoschka (who has been a brilliant painter of travelogue rather than the recorder of a single city), De Chirico, Sloan, Burchfield, and Marin. Of all these painters Hopper is closest in spirit to Sloan and Burchfield, both of whom he admires. Yet the mood of his art is more piercing than theirs: for the gusto of Sloan's local color he substitutes a reticent but quite unforgettable drama of loneliness; to Burchfield's almost "Gothick" commentary on the Victorian architecture of Buffalo he opposes a more arbitrary and structural vision in which the past is less often a spectral entity than a real and sidling presence. Presumably Hopper loves New York as much as John Marin. But while Marin's pictures of the city are motivated by rapture toward its contemporary vitality, Hopper's are by comparison meditative, retroactive, and immeasurably restrained. The latter's paintings often portray those stilled antechambers—a movie theatre, an office at night—wherein people refute for a while the engulfing metropolis that Marin welcomes with open arms.

HOPPER'S pictures tell the time of day or night accurately, but only in order to bring the clock to an absolute halt. In this regard it is interesting to note that Lloyd Goodrich, in his fine catalogue of the Whitney exhibition, mentions Giorgio de Chirico as, like Hopper, an artist particularly interested in the "poetry of buildings and places." I would go further and say that there is a decided affinity between the two painters as to their conception of the dramatic possibilities of arrested time. Both artists, if very unlike in temperament and style, have created an evocative imagery of temporal pause, an imagery in which an atmosphere of time-gone-by acts as the foil to a hushed present. There is, however, an important difference between the two men's pictures, and it perhaps tells



—*Courtesy of The Art Institute of Chicago.*

"Nighthawks," by Edward Hopper—a "bet on Hopper across the board."

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us something about Hopper's unmistakably American psychology as an artist. Whereas De Chirico's art conveys an impression of ominous, impending event, that of Hopper seldom hints at any such metaphysical allusion. Nevertheless, Hopper's factual bluntness is charged with its own emotional power. We may have seen his basic subjects a hundred times in life itself, but it is his summary which makes them stick to consciousness. Indeed, for me one of the fascinations of the Whitney exhibition was that, though my pictorial memory often goes out from under me like Leon Errol's trick knee, I knew most of the paintings by heart.

TO THE formalists, of course, Hopper's acceptance of existing reality makes him seem uncreative. I cannot help feeling that they look too casually at his pictures, put off by subject matter's aggressive presence. Hopper's art at its best has virtues which account for its illustrative intensity and at the same time go beyond it. Take, for instance, his color. Even his admirers tend to speak cautiously of him as a colorist, and obviously he cannot be compared to men like Bonnard or Marin in terms of sensuous appeal.

But that is not the point. Hopper's color is the quiet but trained handmaiden of his romantic-realist conviction; it does not claim the autonomous excitement to which the post-impressionists' innovations opened the way for many modern artists. Within its function, however, Hopper's tonal control is changeable and deft, and its solidity compensates for a lack of textural interest. Moreover, his color's "abstract" contribution to mood and to design is more important than generally acknowledged. The picture called "Chop Suey," for example, portrays four figures seated in a restaurant, which might be of any modest species—except that through the window can be seen an electric sign with the word "Suey" partly visible. The sign is a fire-cracker red, and its hue identifies the scene even more forcefully than its lettering. A traditional Chinese color, of course, but how well suggested and placed in this picture! The red's reflections are arbitrarily cut dead by the surrounding light, and within the restaurant the bland, American colors of the women's clothes predominate. Thus Hopper evolves a subtle interplay between interior and exterior setting, between day-by-day New York reality and sudden, exotic infusion.

"Chop Suey" was painted in 1929. Since that early date in a career which began late (Hopper was almost forty before he began to work professionally in oils), the artist has gained steadily in assurance, and his paintings of the past ten years are on the whole the most remarkable. Among them "Dawn in Pennsylvania," with its muted gradations of gray and rust, illustrates superbly his ability to record the slightest shifts in illumination as it falls on varied surfaces. Light for him is the precious substance it was for the seventeenth-century Dutch painters; he weighs it carefully, then uses it boldly. His "Approaching a City" of 1946 is primarily a study of the effect of light on masonry and concrete walls, recalling the fact that he once gave as his most fervent ambition "to paint sunlight on the side of a house." His preoccupation with stillness in subject matter is the result of his concern with light, and often the scenario of his pictures consists in a drama between shadows and glare.

It is not only in his handling of color and light that Hopper has gained authority with the years. His compositional system, almost always vigorously horizontal, was announced by his etchings of 1919-23, but has since been consistently enriched. Its fundamental is a seemingly casual asymmetry that may originally have owed something to Degas' snapshot arrangements of form, but which Hopper has made into a rare documentary instrument. Thirty years ago Hopper and other native painters and photographers may have decided that it was useless and untrue to impose on the American scene the classical balance which, a hundred years before, had made our Hudson River artists fervent disciples of Poussin and Claude. At any rate, Hopper more than anyone has revealed the overwhelmingly lonely lyricism of American streets, where the jostle of epochs obviates over-all plan, where the present is bright, the past dark and subdued.

"Nighthawks" (see illustration) is an impressive summary of Hopper's esthetic. Within the cafe figures and objects are instantly believable, and only with study do we realize the skill of their selection and grouping. I suppose the pantry window could have been placed elsewhere but I cannot see how; the outside mullion traverses the gleaming coffee urn at the one inevitable place. The figures are noncommittal and undramatic in a human sense but it is they who enliven the thrust of the cafe's rounded prow against the darkened walls of an earlier era, across the street. "Nighthawks" is only one of numerous paintings in the Hopper show in which plastic discipline combines with a strong and tearless romanticism to dignify homely reality.

—JAMES THRALL SOBY.

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Archeological Artist

FREDERICK CATHERWOOD, ARCHT. By Victor Wolfgang von Hagen. New York: Oxford University Press. 177 *pp.* $5.

By GEORGE KUBLER

FREDERICK Catherwood's fame follows his death by about three generations. He did not receive applause during his nomadic life (1799-1854) and it is not likely that this man of "dignity, serenity, reticence" would have enjoyed greater public notice. The pupil of Sir John Soane, Catherwood became by his own election an archeologist, dedicated to the exact yet impassioned drawings of ancient monuments that engaged the best moments of his life, in Sicily, Egypt, Palestine. Above all, he drew in Guatemala and Yucatan, where, with John Lloyd Stephens on two journeys in 1839-40 and 1841-42, Catherwood was the first European accurately to record the monuments of Mayan architecture and sculpture.

Mr. Von Hagen's biography is as clear and precise and warm as one of Catherwood's drawings, with a wealth of knowledge that lay unexposed until the author discovered the clues and pieced out the lines of connection. Catherwood was the friend of Joseph Severn and therefore of John Keats. His choice of career and his style of drawings were influenced by Piranesi: Catherwood in turn influenced Thomas Cole in New York. We owe Catherwood the finest drawings ever made of Mayan art. But his complete drawings—still lost—of the Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem would be all of capital interest to modern studies of early Islamic architecture. As an architect he built a glass edifice and workers' housing in London; in New York he was the architectural partner of Frederick Diaper and the chief exponent of those vast circular murals or panoramas that were a principal urban entertainment of the day. In 1842 the fire of Catherwood's Rotunda, where the panoramas were exhibited, destroyed the Mayan collections from Yucatan, which Stephens and Catherwood had shipped to New York. The carved lintels of wood, the stone sculptures and the vases, the travel notes and Catherwood's drawings also were destroyed, in the largest holocaust of Mayan antiquities since the Spanish Conquest, when Bishop Landa burned a pile of Mayan books at Mani in 1562.

Soon after the fire Catherwood turned to engineering. He designed and began building the first railroad in South America, on the Demerara coast of British Guiana. He also assisted Stephens in the building of the railroad spanning the Isthmus of Panama. A brief, sunny moment of hope in California, where success seemed near with another railroad project, was snatched from Catherwood, when, returning from England in 1854, he was drowned at sea in the sinking of the *S.S. Arctic.*

The book is illustrated by half-tones of the rare "Views of Ancient Monuments in Central America, Chiapas, and Yucatan," in twenty-five plates and with sixteen other figures, of which eight reproduce Catherwood's original water colors and pencil and sepia drawings. The introduction, by Aldous Huxley, brings an interesting speculation on the artist-archeologist and upon the modern processes of illustration. The book continues Mr. Von Hagen's investigation of the nineteenth-century figures who were responsible for the formulation of an ancient history of continental America. He has already published a biography of Catherwood's associate in Central America, J. L. Stephens, and is currently preparing a life of E. G. Squier, the traveler, archeologist, diplomat, and journalist of the next generation after Stephens and Catherwood.

In addition to making the most of the technical and human interest of Catherwood's life, Mr. Von Hagen has also made a masterly study of the mechanics of the oblivion that engulfed Catherwood alive and since his death. The book is valuable as a social history, not so much of one environment as of a Victorian individual in the world ambient that was open to him if he chose, as did Catherwood, to lose himself in its deep time.

George Kubler is professor of the history of art at Yale University and author of "Mexican Architecture in the Sixteenth Century."

LITERARY I.Q. ANSWERS

1.George Pontifex, in "The Way of All Flesh," by Samuel Butler. 2. Prince Arthur, in "King John," by Shakespeare. 3. Honor Harris, in "The King's General," by Daphne du Maurier. 4. Sheridan Whiteside, in "The Man Who Came to Dinner," by Kaufman and Hart. 5. "Ben Hur," by Lew Wallace. 6. Homer Adam, in "Mr. Adam," by Pat Frank. 7. Willie Baxter, in "Seventeen," by Booth Tarkington. 8. Ethan Frome and Mattie Silver, in "Ethan Frome," by Edith Wharton. 9. "Cyrano de Bergerac," by Edmond Rostand. 10. "Alice Fell," by William Wordsworth.

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Great Painters & Parallel Poets

THE HISTORY OF MODERN PAINTING: Vol. I: From Baudelaire to Bonnard. Text by Maurice Raynal. New York: Albert Skira. 150 *pp.* $12.50.

By Walter Pach

FOR book lovers as well as for art lovers this volume offers the opportunity to say welcome to Albert Skira as he begins publishing in America. For twenty years previously his magnificent editions have been coming to this country through importers; it is a satisfaction to know that he has found here such appreciation of his work as to make him establish a branch of his house here.

The most casual glance at the eighty color plates illustrating the first volume of this history of modern painting will convince even a skeptic that reproduction in color has now reached a level justifying the publisher's claim that such representation of the masters really does supersede the black and white cuts in earlier volumes on art. Used in books to make clear the meaning of the text, they have real educational value; it is only when naive people look on them as substitutes for originals that they prove disappointing: the gap separating the two categories of work will forever be unbridgeable.

Having spoken of the work of Mr. Skira and the remarkable staff of technical collaborators whom he delights in mentioning (as they deserve), we come to the other notable feature of the book, its text. Again we are offered a collaboration. Herbert Read, in his introduction to the book, convinces one anew of his stature as a critic or, perhaps more accurately, as a philosopher. Jean Leymarie furnishes historical notes to every chapter and biographical notes on the artists, thus covering in logical and impersonal form the content of most histories. Stuart Gilbert translates into fluent and idiomatic English these notes and the text of Maurice Raynal, a seasoned critic of modern art and a personal friend of many of its best practitioners.

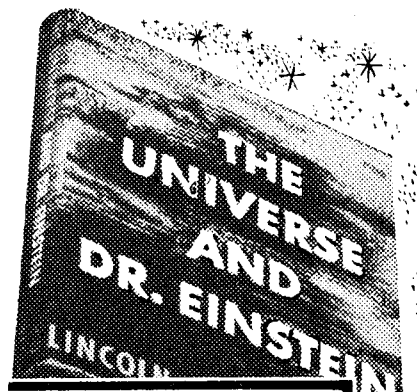
The present year is to see the publication of the two remaining volumes, which will carry the reader through to the present day. The placing of a poet at the threshold of modern painting is one more novelty in the series, but when one thinks of Baudelaire's prophetic seeing of Delacroix, Courbet, Manet, and others, the innovation seems a happy one. Indeed M. Raynal repeatedly traces the relationship of the great painters and their parallels among contemporary poets. Added to the help this can give to the seeker for understanding are accounts of the scientific discoveries which influenced painting, the contributions of the Japanese, of the theatre, the new use of lithography, etc. While M. Raynal's knowledge of all these matters is intimate and his following out of the history is at once painstaking and sympathetic, many a reader will finish the book with more of pleasure in a work well done than with a sense of having progressed beyond the ideas he had derived from previous writers. Th "noble enigma" of Cézanne, the grandeur of his own work, and the vistas he opens up to his successors will have lost but little of their mystery.

The author might very well reply, however, that no one has ever explained a work of art and that you must make for yourself the effort required to penetrate to essential meanings, for they are inseparable from the enjoyment of painting, of sculpture, of music, and the other arts. No one can experience for you the sensations that life can give or art can give. Why such books then? Because presenting the background of the arts, tracing their influences one on another, and expressing one's delight in them, as M. Raynal does so eloquently in his characterization of Vuillard, for example, are legitimate aids to the seeker. His mind will be better oriented to the masters, the true guides, who speak and give pleasure through the plates in this volume.

Walter Pach is author of "The Masters of Modern Art," "Modern Art in America," and "Vincent van Gogh."

Art Notes

VAN GOGH, by Philip James. CEZANNE, by Adrian Stokes. CHAGALL, by Michael Ayrton. ROYAL PORTRAITS, by R. H. Wilenski. Pitman. $1.95 each. These four newest entries bring the total of titles in the uniformly fine Pitman Gallery paperbacked series to sixteen, as diverse a list as is to be found in any art series. It is Pitman's practice to issue them in batches of four, three devoted to the work of a single artist and one to a general subject. The general volume this time brings together ten handsome color plates of royal personages, the work of Holbein, Titian, Velasquez, *et al.* The editor of the series, R. H. Wilenski, provides historical notes about the sitters rather than



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the more usual critical comment.

The same editorial pattern is followed in the monographs—a three-page introduction followed by ten plates of very high quality, attached to the page facing the pertinent notes. The reader will get the sense of a fresh approach as he leafs through the Van Gogh and Cézanne volumes because there are few old chestnuts among the reproductions. This is particularly apparent in the Cézanne plates, for they come from English collections and have been rarely quoted. Indeed, several I have never seen in color.

In his introduction and notes to the Van Gogh portfolio James adopts the biographical approach, buttressing his observations liberally with quotations from the artist's letters. As for the Cézanne volume, I doubt whether he has ever been so clearly interpreted in so few words as Stokes performs the task.

Probably the Chagall volume will not arouse as wide an interest as the other monographs because he is still quite alive, and there has not yet been time for a large body of literature on him to circulate. Yet the appreciation of his work that Ayrton has compressed into these few pages should result in a deeper understanding of this painter. The notes consist of quotations from the artist's writings, some of them prepared by Chagall especially for this volume.

ENCAUSTIC MATERIALS AND METHODS, by Frances Pratt and Becca Fizel. Lear. $3. Here is a useful handbook on the newly revived ancient art of painting in wax, describing the methods employed by some thirty artists, most of them contemporary. The variety of opinions and techniques recorded should solve many beginners' problems. Twenty illustrations, four of them in color, serve as fair samples of this art form. Equally helpful is a list of necessary materials and dealers from whom they may be purchased. The weird editing of the bibliography is unhappily reminiscent of the English captions that used to appear on Japanese postcards. —L. R. SANDER.

SOLUTION OF LAST WEEK'S DOUBLE-CROSTIC (No. 831)

HENRY L. MENCKEN: *CHRESTOMATHY*

In ..... later years, with wisdom radiating from me like heat from a stove, I have occasionally gone back to journalism. ..... There is something delightful about getting an idea on paper while it is still hot and charming. ..... before it pales. [Begins to pale.]

The New Recordings

COMPOSITION, PERFORMER, ALBUM NUMBER, NUMBER OF RECORDS	ENGINEERING *Recording Technique, Surface*	PERFORMANCE AND CONTENT
BACH ON 45		
BACH: "THE WELL-TEMPERED CLAVIER," Book I, Preludes and Fugues 1 through 8 (E flat mi.). Wanda Landowska, harpsichord. *RCA Victor 45: WDM 1338 (6)	This was never piano music, nor strictly harpsichord (much is also suited to percussion-operated clavichord); harpsichord registration, like organ, is infinitely variable, according to player's taste—thus Landowska's great undertaking, work of a top musician, is in no sense "definitive" nor could be. But there is enormous information here, as well as superb listening. Pianists note: (a) utter clarity, esp. in thicker (5 pt.) fugues; (b) some unexpected rhythmic variants from common practice; (c) wholly authentic freedom with rolled chords, frequent octave coupling; (d) *correct* ornaments, everywhere. Recording a bit on wiry side—harpsichord has been done better than this.	
BACH: "JESUS, DEAREST MASTER" ("Jesu, Meine Freude"). RCA Victor Chorale, Robert Shaw. *RCA Victor 45: WDM 1339 (4)	American Bach, in English—a most interesting job, beautifully recorded with nice liveness, clear diction. No similar group can compare with this for instrumental accuracy of ensemble and over-all pitch. American-style trained richness of tone is good in chorales and block-chord passages, obscures lines and harmony in thicker contrapuntal sections. Interpretation is heartfelt, yet still somehow both over-chaste and a bit brash; lacks subtleties of phrasing and tonal expression achieved by some European groups. I'd call it improved over earlier Shaw Bach.	
WALTZ TIME		
R. STRAUSS: WALTZ SUITE FROM "ROSENKAVALIER." London Philharmonic, Rankl. London 78: LA 118 (2)	Old-fashioned ffrr, a huge resonant happy blur of hi-fi sound. For the music, this type of mike pickup lacks focus and sharpness. Too distant, massive. (This is a matter of taste, however.) The Waldteufel, below, seems to me ideal, with greater clarity, less pretentiousness.	A liberally extensive excerpting, much of it not in ¾ time—good idea, giving more natural sense of continuity. Quiet, inconspicuous playing, quite lovely, in spite of massive acoustics.
J. STRAUSS: OVERTURE TO "THE GYPSY BARON." London Philharmonic, Kleiber. London 78: T. 5362 (1)		A Strauss overture always ends up as a waltz—this is similar to the complete waltzes, with slow beginning, in duple time, leading to faster waltz.
WALDTEUFEL MEMORIES; KALMAN MEMORIES. Robert Stolz and his concert orch. London LP: LLP. 143	A stunning job, wide-range, smooth and pliant in sound, with bright, warm acoustics, perfect for the waltz. A fine demonstration record.	Belies its semi-pops look. I could spare the Kalman side, but the Waldteufel is one of most delightful waltz sessions I have yet to hear. Warm, rosy, ingratiatingly musical.
J. STRAUSS WALTZES. ("Roses from the South," "Voices of Spring," "1001 Nights," "Acceleration.") Vienna Phil., Krauss; Berlin Phil., Kleiber. *Capitol LP: P-8061	These are not extraordinary technically, though entirely OK for listening. Not much on highs, acoustics a bit dead, muffled, compared to above. (Quite old recordings.)	Collection of straightforward, Viennese-style recordings, non-glamorized. Absence of high-powered showmanship is welcome. Deadish recording takes edge off music.
HAYDN: SYMPHONY #93 IN D. NBC Symphony, Guido Cantelli. RCA 45: *WDM 1323 (3)	Good latter-day NBC recording, clean and with wide range, acoustically on the dead side.	One of the most ingratiating of the twelve last symphonies, the main allegro theme now a familiar hymn. Cantelli does a musical job; Beecham does more with it in his older recording.
THOMSON: "LOUISIANA STORY." Philadelphia Orch., Ormandy. *Columbia LP: ML 2087 (½ 10") (Also "Five Portraits.")	Standard brilliant Phila. recording; acoustics excellent for this music.	Music from the film — rather tame minus pictures, except for fine "alligator" fugue movement, a real *tour de force.*

*Also other speeds

—EDWARD TATNALL CANBY.

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the Phoenix Nest

NINE LITTLE PIGS

THE NINE little pigs are pink and white,
and they bruise their baby shoulders,
as their squirming epiderms worry the sow,
the poor old sow who doesn't know how
to keep them still as they suckle and grunt,
and butt their heads and buckle and bunt
the bellying side of that rippled hide
provided with swollen boulders!

The poor old sow has a porcine face
for to scare the hair off a kitten;
an unkissable face is no disgrace
for a porker whose dugs are bitten;
reclined in the sty, she bears the hurt,
her babies bunched like a scalloped skirt,
their pink-white bottoms as bare as sin,
their immaculate hams still a bit too thin,
for the suckling pigs must take their lumps
and mature as shoats with sizable rumps,—
O they'll have to get used to thwacking thumps,
and beware of barbs and electric fence,
a headstall, sledge, and a butcher's knife,—
for a farmer with grim impertinence
won't bat an eyelash in taking a life!

But the sow twists her head with a look benign
at her infant world in a world porcine
(a euphoric sense a pig's divine)
though one of them's lost his place in line,
for their tongues are soft,—O soft and light
are the tongues of her darlings, pink and white,
as they take their fill, sweet drink, not swill,
the nine little pigs, the darlings!

O never enough! O never enough
is there drink for each little devil!
A piggywig shout, and they tumble about
in discontented revel!
And the old sow flails their upcurled tails,
and the piglets hoink and squeal,
as one and all assault the wall,
and rebuked, climb over each other and fall,
and jostle and jaunce and jolt and lurch,
their sensitive snouts in preoccupied search,
till resigned at last to no fresh repast,
the intemperate brood nuzzles closer;
and the poor old sow, content with her lot,
so glad they've gotten what's theirs to be got,
counts nine little pairs of transparent ears,
and prays for the health of her porky dears
to the god of the sty (the Porcine Eye
that keeps watch as well as it can)
to bless their rest and preserve them undrest,—
and the devil with moral man!

—I. L. SALOMON.

* * *

THE BUTTERFLY STORM

It was early one October afternoon when they blew through town like a migration of autumn leaves. As I stood at my window I realized with a start that the brilliant brown and orange was not dead leaf but a flight of Monarch butterflies heading purposefully south.

There was no idle fluttering about, no drifting to the ground, but anxious hurrying to a winter home by the Pacific. Along the ground, through the trees, and over the housetops they came in ever-increasing flurries until at last the air was filled with a surging flood of air-borne life. For the unutterable length of a wing-filled hour they followed their mile-wide path and when the last stragglers had gone we could only stand there mute and shaken with remembrance.

Now that March is here the butterfly storm will rise in great clouds from the pine trees of Pacific Grove and head north through California to summer in the Canadian Rockies. Again the great wing dance of the season will begin as punctual as the sun of returning spring.

—MARGARET LEWIS ALBANESE.

* * *

THE IMMORTAL JESTER

Climbing the trail,
I looked for Hope
And found him pale
And starkly still.
"Poor Hope," I said,
"I'll put you away,
Your pulse is dead."
I wrapped Hope
In a winding sheet;
I lowered him deep,

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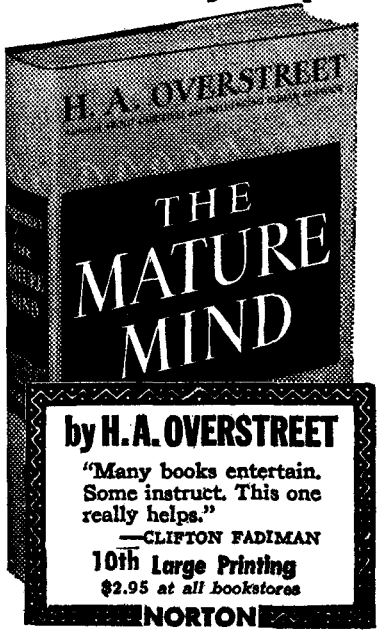

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NORTON

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Twice-six-feet,
Into the clay;
I heaped a mound
With brambled brush
And stones I'd found;
But before I'd hewn
Full epitaph,
From deep clay grave,
I heard Hope laugh.

—GENE MOLONEY.

* * *

MARCH WIND

Late afternoon
Was amethyst and amber
Until the wind
Curled its tail
Around the day
And pulled it
Wrong side out.

—CATHERINE CATES.

* * *

I am glad to print the following from the poet Witter Bynner:

I have come across an item which you might possibly use on one occasion or another in THE PHOENIX NEST.

It is what seems to me a top piece of punning by Charles K. Field, who used to be editor of *Sunset Magazine* in San Francisco. It was probably written when the Olympic games were held in Stockholm, which should date it for someone with a better memory than mine. Here it is:

EUPHONETICISM

Stockholm people tell this story:
When the Games were in their glory
How a sand-flea bit a winner,
Witter Bynner.

Though the athlete's finger crost it
Quick as lightning, yet he lost it
And it made the winner bitter,
Witter Bynner.

If a wit had thought it cunning
To adorn the tale by punning,
Would the wit ha' been a winner,
Witter Bynner?

And if I, who merely edit,
Had aspired to joker's credit,
Would I then have been a wit or
been a—what?
Witter Bynner?

* * *

I'LL TAKE BOYS

When little girls are very bored
They'll still be sweet as honey—
Or blank-polite, at worst, is all;
But I'll take, for *my* money,
Little boys who scowl and squirm
And long for class to end—
For when a *boy* gets interested,
You know it, my good friend!

—VIRGINIA SCOTT MINER.

* * *

—WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT.

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DOUBLE-CROSTIC NO. 832

Reg. U. S. Patent Office

By Elizabeth S. Kingsley

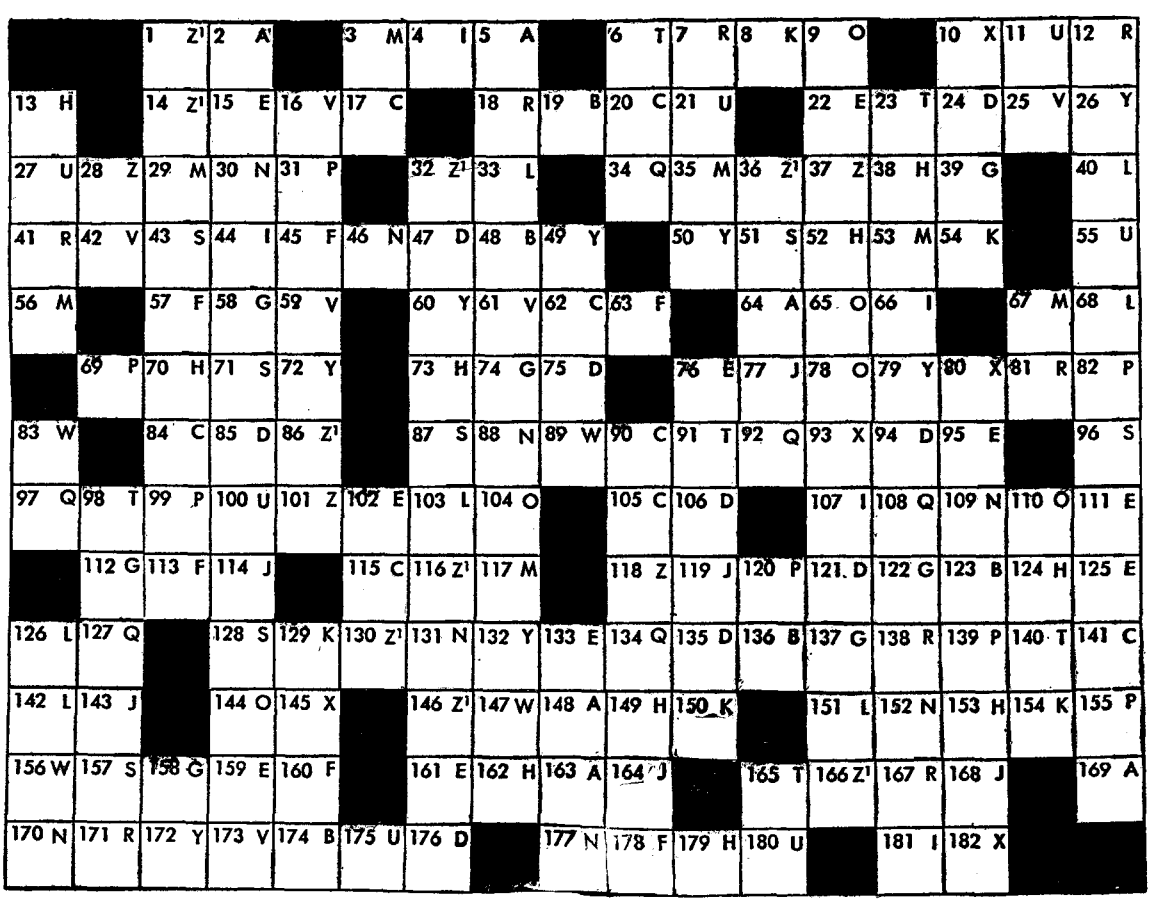
DEFINITIONS	WORDS
A. A "Barsetshire Chronicle" by Trollope (with "The").	64 163 148 169 2 5
B. An important English statesman of the present Labor Party.	136 19 174 48 123
C. Soapstone (mineral.).	17 90 20 84 105 141 115 62
D. English dramatist (1570?-1627; "Women Beware Women," etc.).	121 135 176 94 24 75 47 106 85
E. In a position to get, do, or the like (4 wds.).	159 133 161 15 95 22 102 111 125 76
F. English versifier of world wide fame for "Proverbial Philosophy," 1838.	57 113 178 160 63 45
G. The flicker (local U. S.; comp.).	58 122 137 39 74 158 112
H. County of Edinburgh, Scotland, in title of a Scott novel.	13 70 124 149 179 73 162 52 153 38
I. State flower of New Mexico.	66 181 44 107 4
J. Popular "Valse" by Sibelius.	164 119 77 143 114 168
K. First name of heroine in title of Ibsen drama.	54 129 150 154 8
L. Agitated; disturbed.	103 126 33 68 151 142 40
M. Pertaining to the interior of the ear.	117 56 53 67 35 29 3

DEFINITIONS	WORDS
N. One of two general "plans" in practice in hotels.	170 177 109 88 131 152 46 30
O. River in Scotland celebrated by Wordsworth; also, a common wild flower.	104 65 110 78 144 9
P. Compositions in pensive or mournful mood (music).	99 69 155 31 139 120 82
Q. Items of value owned (accounting).	108 34 127 97 92 134
R. *Pondered; thought over repeatedly.*	7 41 171 12 138 167 81 18
S. Sensational (figuratively).	157 51 71 87 128 43 96
T. Had a teasing uneasiness.	91 140 98 165 23 6
U. Small drinks.	180 55 21 27 175 11 100
V. American etcher and landscape painter (1842-1922; Met. Museum, etc.).	42 16 173 25 59 61
W. Maine island, scene of novel by Harriet Beecher Stowe.	147 156 89 83
X. Charred part of a candle wick.	182 80 93 10 145
Y. Happens; takes place (2 wds.).	49 132 79 72 26 172 50 60
Z. Morsels left at a meal.	37 28 118 101
Z^1. Middle name of popular American poet, deceased.	1 166 86 130 146 32 36 14 116

DIRECTIONS

To solve this puzzle you must guess twenty-odd words, the definitions of which are given in the column headed DEFINITIONS. The letters in each word to be guessed are numbered. These numbers appear under the dashes in the column headed WORDS. There is a dash for each letter in the required word. The key letters in the squares are for convenience, indicating to which word in the definitions each letter in the diagram belongs. When you have guessed a word, fill it in on the dashes; then write each letter in the correspondingly numbered square of the puzzle diagram. When the squares are all filled in you will find (by reading from left to right) a quotation from a famous author. Read up and down the letters mean nothing. The black squares indicate ends of words; words do not necessarily end at the right side of the diagram.

When the column headed WORDS is filled in, the initial letters spell the name of the author and the title of the piece from which the quotation has been taken. Authority for spelling and definitions is Webster's New International Dictionary (second edition).



Solution of last week's Double-Crostic will be found on page 46 of this issue.

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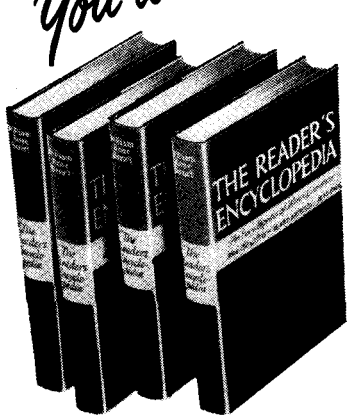

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